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Terms	Documents
705/36	1392

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DB=PGPB,USPT,USOC,EPAB,JPAB,DWPI,TDBD; PLUR=YES; OP=OR

L20 705/36

L19 705/36r

L18 ('6601044')[URPN]

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L16 ('6601044')[ABPN1,NRPN,PN,TBAN,WKU]

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2369 L9

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79 L7

95 L6

252 L5

1 L4

416 L3

40672 L2

2386 L1

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L15: Entry 11 of 11

File: USPT

Jul 29, 2003

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6601044 B1

TITLE: Method and apparatus for enabling individual or smaller investors or others to create and manage a portfolio of securities or other assets or liabilities on a cost effective basis

Abstract Text (1):

A computer-based system is disclosed for creating a portfolio of assets and executing trades in the assets to modify the portfolio. An embodiment of the disclosed system includes a first processor interfaced with an investor's PC to select a plurality of assets to be in the investor's portfolio based on the investor's indicated preferences, to manage the portfolio in accordance with market changes and changes in the investor's indicated preferences, and to electronically place at least one asset trading order in accordance with the investor's indicated preferences. An embodiment of the system also includes a communication interface coupled to the processor and coupled to a plurality of other investors by which the processor electronically places the at least one order. Further, an embodiment of the system includes a central processor coupled to the communication interface, receiving a plurality of trading orders from among the plurality of investors' PC's, and electronically forwarding the trading orders for execution to a third party.

Parent Case Text (2):

This application is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/038,158 entitled "Method and Apparatus for Enabling Individual or Smaller Investors or Others to Create and Manage a Portfolio of Securities or Other Assets Or Liabilities on a Cost Effective Basis" filed by the same inventor on Mar. 11, 1998, which is hereby incorporated by reference as if repeated herein in its entirety, including the drawings.

Brief Summary Text (2):

The present invention relates generally to methods and apparatuses for electronically trading and investing in securities or other assets, rights or liabilities, such as commodities or futures. More particularly, the present invention relates to a method and apparatus for electronically trading over wired and wireless networks, including over the Internet, and investing in securities or other assets, rights or liabilities that enables a user, at a reasonable cost, to create and manage a complex and diversified portfolio of such securities or other assets, rights or liabilities.

Brief Summary Text (3):

Currently, small investors generally have two choices with regard to making investments in securities. First, they can acquire directly shares or derivatives on shares (for example, buy 1000 shares of Microsoft or an option on Microsoft stock) or can acquire directly a derivative that derives its value from multiple securities (such as an option on the Dow Jones Industrials). In this instance of direct purchases (through "brokerage"), the investor is the actual owner of the particular security or derivative. (Where the investor owns a derivative security, the investor generally has no ownership interest in the underlying securities,

which determine the value of the derivative). Second, these investors can purchase an interest in an intermediary (which interest could itself be a security), such as a trust, corporation or other business vehicle that derives its value from multiple other securities (such as a trust that contains a portfolio of stocks like the stocks that comprise the S&P 500, or a portfolio of other stocks). This second category of intermediary products is principally comprised of open-end mutual funds (such as the Fidelity, Vanguard, Scudder and other mutual funds) that invest in other securities, but also includes closed-end mutual funds, unit trusts and other vehicles, and is referred to collectively herein as "funds." In this second case where the investing is done through an intermediary vehicle, the investor owns an interest in the vehicle. That vehicle in turn owns the underlying securities (as in a mutual fund). Each of these two traditional investment strategies--either (i) trading individual securities or derivatives through brokerage, or (ii) investing in funds--has disadvantages for the investor, which are described below.

Brief Summary Text (5):

1. Inability to Select Securities or Monitor Selection of Securities. An investor in a fund is precluded from selecting the individual securities (or derivatives, which unless otherwise noted are hereinafter included in "securities") to be included in, or excluded from, the fund's portfolio.

Brief Summary Text (7):

In addition, except for some targeted funds, it is not possible for the investor to express any preferences--even general ones--regarding matters such as social or moral issues (such as not wanting to, or only wanting to, invest in companies that engage in business with certain governments or have operations in certain sectors, such as defense). Even in those few instances where a targeted fund exists for those types of preferences, the preferences that the investor can have reflected are, at best, very general with the investor having no ability to select specific stocks, either to include or exclude, from the portfolio.

Brief Summary Text (8):

It is also not possible for the investor to control what specific securities a fund will hold in its portfolio, or with what weighting or amounts. An investor could select a fund that reflects, for example, an index, but the fund then invests in whatever securities, and with whatever weighting, comprises the index. Consequently, when the investor invests in a fund, the investor may be investing in securities in which the investor would otherwise prefer not to have an interest, or not as much of an interest. In addition, an investor that invests in multiple funds or that holds other investment securities other than solely one fund, will likely be overweighted or under weighted in particular industries or stocks frequently without his knowledge, and without any mechanism to correct the allocation.

Brief Summary Text (9):

2. Inability to Control Tax Effects. An investor in a fund receives ordinary income distributions at the discretion (subject to certain legal constraints), and depending on the management style, of the fund. Funds that churn portfolios generate more transactions than funds that do not, but the taxable distributions are dependent on the fund's activities--not the investor's.

Brief Summary Text (12):

Alternatively, an investor can invest in a fund that attempts to limit the fund's uncontrollable tax effects. For example, a fund that engages in no selection of stocks--such as an index fund or a fund that simply invests in the largest 500 or 1000 corporations--would have little turnover from a manager buying or selling securities in order to adjust the portfolio's holdings. Even in these funds, however, there are purchases and sales by the fund to reflect redemptions or cash contributions by investors. As more investors buy into the fund, the manager buys more of the specified securities. As redemptions occur, the manager sells some of the securities to obtain cash to pay to the fund holders who are redeeming their

interests in the fund. Consequently, if there was a net gain on those transactions, holders in these funds, which are generally tax flow-through funds, will receive a taxable gain, regardless of their desire. (While such a fund has net inflows of investments from investors, there will be no or little tax effect because the fund will, almost exclusively, be acquiring securities. When the fund eventually has net outflows, however, limiting the tax effects will be far more difficult.)

Brief Summary Text (19):

Certain funds other than open-end mutual funds, such as closed-end funds or some trusts, as well as derivative securities, do trade during the day and therefore can reflect intra-day price movements. Each of these other vehicles, however, has negative characteristics that have made them unpopular with investors, including discounts to fair market value of the underlying securities, less transparency than open-end mutual funds or relatively unchangeable, static portfolios, and they are not generally viewed as substitutes for an open-end mutual fund. In addition, in these vehicles as well, the investor buys or sells only an interest in the fund, not the securities owned by the fund.

Brief Summary Text (20):

7. Inability to Monitor and Control Risk Levels and "Styles" of Investing. An investor in a fund can receive historical information as to risk and returns for the fund. Mutual funds that are actively managed--as opposed to passively managed indexed funds or static portfolio trusts--are managed by individuals, and frequently by teams of individuals, making buy and sell decisions. When some of those individuals depart the fund, the "style" of investing of the fund may change. Even if those individual managers never depart the fund, the market may present them with fewer or greater opportunities to buy or sell securities under a particular "style" than they had before. Or their views as to the market may change and with it their investment mix. Some investors in these funds accept these changes in style and direction and view that as part of what they are paying for with the management fee. Others, however, attempt to select funds based on the funds supposed risk, sector of interest and other factors (including previous returns or returns relative to an index). It is not possible to control those factors in these funds in advance, however, unless the fund commits to a mechanical style of investing with extremely limited discretion--which is typical for an index fund but very rare for an actively managed fund.

Brief Summary Text (22):

9. Inability to Manage Multiple Investments as a Whole. When an investor is invested in multiple funds, it is very difficult for the investor to understand the overall portfolio characteristics of their investment. In other words, many investors may have one or a few investments in funds in 401(k) or other retirement accounts, and then a few other fund investments or individual stock investments outside of their retirement accounts. These investors generally do not manage their overall portfolio of multiple funds and individual stock holdings as a whole managed portfolio, because it is very difficult to discern the overall risk and return of the integrated portfolio of multiple funds and individual stocks. Of course, it is that integrated portfolio that will, ultimately, provide returns for the investor. Some investors pay to have multiple funds managed by investing in "funds of funds" that attempt to do that for them. Even here, the investor's portfolio does not include, for purposes of determining whether the investor's overall portfolio is being managed well, those funds that are not part of the "fund of funds" complex, or individual stocks held by the investor.

Brief Summary Text (24):

1. Inability to Create a Diversified Portfolio on a Cost Effective Basis. Under portfolio theory, an investor should seek to create a diversified portfolio when investing. Diversification provides an investor with a similar return with lower risk, or a higher return with the same level of risk, as a non-diversified portfolio. Simply put, portfolio theory dictates that there is no advantage to an

ordinary investor in holding a non-diversified portfolio of publicly-traded securities as opposed to a diversified portfolio. Nevertheless, few smaller investors are able to create a diversified portfolio. The obstacles to creating such a portfolio for the smaller investor have been the inability of the ordinary investor to be able to craft such a portfolio on his own, combined with the costs of engaging in the trading necessary to create and maintain such a portfolio, and the inability to consummate trades in small quantities needed to create such a portfolio. Consequently, most investors who have understood the benefits, or at least understood that there is a benefit, from diversification have turned to mutual funds. And that desire for diversification has been a primary factor in the explosive growth of such funds, notwithstanding all of the disadvantages of investing in mutual funds as described above. Simply put, the concept underlying brokerage has been the selection of individual stocks, not the creation of an interacting portfolio of securities (something which has been left to the funds).

Brief Summary Text (25):

Costs: The costs for an individual or smaller investor, or an investor seeking to invest a smaller amount, in attempting to create and maintain a diversified portfolio stem, in part, from the cost of brokerage. An investor buys or sells individual securities by employing a broker. The broker purchases the selected securities for the investor directly or from a dealer or on an exchange. The costs to a retail investor of purchasing or selling a security are reflected in charges that fall generally into two categories. (For larger institutional orders, these two costs generally are far lower on a percentage basis relative to the investment as compared to a smaller order, but there are significant, additional other costs to these larger orders stemming, for example, from the market impact of the order itself--in other words the ability of the existence of a very large buy or sell order to affect the price at which the order will be effected by moving the applicable bid-ask quotes. Other systems (the OptiMark.TM. trading system, ITG-Posit, noted below) have attempted to address this problem for these large institutional investors.)

Brief Summary Text (28):

To create and maintain a diversified portfolio of individual stocks, an investor would have to purchase at least twenty to fifty stocks, and be in a position to add to that securities portfolio on a proportionate basis as new dollars are received to make additional investments, and to re-balance the portfolio periodically as the markets and the securities change. In other words, an investor would first have to create a diversified portfolio by purchasing say fifty stocks, and then continue to purchase stocks in appropriate proportions with any additional amounts sought to be invested on, say, a monthly basis, and also re-balance the portfolio periodically. Obviously, the basic brokerage costs--even employing the deepest discounted brokerage services--would be prohibitive for the ordinary investor. For example, to create and maintain a diversified portfolio, an investor seeking to invest \$2,000 per month (a relatively high amount for the ordinary investor), would likely incur minimum all-in transaction costs for an initial fifty stock purchase of at least (and this would be optimistic) \$500--or fully 25% of the initial invested amount. Such charges are obviously prohibitive.

Brief Summary Text (29):

The best that an investor can do with \$2,000 per month to invest who does not wish to invest in a fund or a derivative product would be to try to build such a portfolio for lower costs by buying one or two separate stocks each month and thereby, over a number of years, create a diversified portfolio. Such a strategy has a number of drawbacks as well as taking years to implement. An investor could also add to an already diversified portfolio for a lower cost by making subsequent monthly purchases of just one or two stocks. The drawbacks in terms of lack of flexibility, inability to modify the portfolio, etc.--all similar to the problems with a locked-in portfolio stemming from a mutual fund investment--exist with this strategy as well. Only with investments approaching \$10,000 per month--a

prohibitive level for most investors--could these costs even begin to be viewed as non-prohibitive on a recurring basis. Furthermore, smaller investors with limited funds to invest are biased, as a practical matter, towards stocks whose value are low, i.e., \$10-20 per share (which for a round lot would be \$1,000-2,000) as opposed to \$100-200 per share (which for a round lot would be \$10,000-20,000), thereby limiting the possible selection of stocks.

Brief Summary Text (30):

As a practical matter then, brokerage costs and constraints eliminate the possibility that the ordinary investor can create and maintain a diversified portfolio on his own--as opposed to through a fund, even were the investor to have the tools and skill to be able to do so.

Brief Summary Text (31):

Capability. In addition to prohibitive costs, ordinary investors possess neither the skills nor the tools necessary to create and maintain a diversified portfolio with desired risk-return characteristics. To create such a portfolio, an investor needs to understand risk as it is defined from the perspective of portfolio theory, and have the data and the mechanism for analyzing the data to employ the theory. That data then needs to be correctly employed in connection with a trading system to allow for the cost effective creation and maintenance of the portfolio. There is no brokerage (or other system) that deploys, uses and otherwise acts upon the necessary diversification information, combined with a trading system, so as to be accessible by an ordinary investor. There are, and have been a variety of systems (for example, Schwab One Source (www.schwab.com), Financial Engines (www.financialengines.com) and a new Microsoft site (<http://beta.investor.com>)) that provide advice to investors as to the creation of a portfolio of mutual funds based on, among other things, risk, style, performance, and ratings. These systems, however, are not designed to enable investors to purchase a portfolio of specific securities (as opposed to assisting in the purchase of a few, specific mutual funds, with all the attendant disadvantages of holding mutual funds) in a cost effective manner, or hold fractional shares in securities (as opposed to interests in funds), or obtain any of the other advantages stemming from the ability to invest directly in securities as opposed to funds, all as mentioned above and discussed further below.

Brief Summary Text (33):

Purchasing or selling a security through an ordinary brokerage requires transactions to be effected in minimum units of whole numbers. In other words, an investor can purchase no less than 1 share of IBM or sell no less than 1 share of General Motors, and purchases or sales must be whole numbers such as 27 shares, as opposed to 27.437 shares. In addition, costs are frequently prohibitive for small transactions in a security (such as 1 or 2 shares) or even for transactions in less than a round lot (100 shares). An investor buying a round lot in the ordinary security trading between \$20 and \$40 would be buying at least \$2,000 to \$4,000 worth of the security. Buying 50 round lots to create a diversified portfolio requires a greater investment (\$100,000 to \$200,000) than most investors are able to make. As a specific example, then, an investor wishing to invest \$150 per week could, through an ordinary brokerage, at best buy 7 shares of a \$20 stock, or 3 shares of a \$40 stock, invest the balance in cash, and wait for the next week to buy a different stock or more of the same stock. But at a brokerage cost of, say, just \$5 per security traded, the brokerage costs would range from \$15 to \$35 (a prohibitive 10% to over 23% of the amount to be invested). This is not a practical alternative. The only alternative that has been reasonable to date for an investor in this position has been to invest in a fund.

Brief Summary Text (34):

3. Inability to Select Individual Securities Reflecting Preferences to be Included Within a Diversified Portfolio. Using a broker, an individual or smaller investor, or a person investing a smaller amount, obviously can select individual securities

for purchase and sale. Ordinary brokerage, however, does not provide a mechanism for readjusting an entire portfolio of holdings as a unified portfolio of investments. Consequently, most investors are likely to be overweighted in a particular security or sector because of the costs of re-configuring their portfolio and an inability to determine the overall profile of the portfolio. Even if the overall risk and other profile characteristics are determined, the investor would usually not be in a position to act to make the portfolio diversified because of the cost issue described above.

Brief Summary Text (36):

4. Inability to Obtain Superior Trade Executions. Brokers generally execute trades when received, thereby providing "immediate" executions. There are exceptions, however. For example, a trade can be a "limit" order meaning that it can be executed only at a specific price or better. Limit orders are generally executed immediately whenever the price reaches the limit. Trades can also be set for execution at the "open" or "close," meaning the trade will be executed as part of the opening or closing call auction procedures, or upon the satisfaction of certain other conditions or at certain other times as the customer may specify.

Brief Summary Text (39):

5. Failure to Monitor Portfolio Based Tax Effects. Although brokers obviously could monitor the overall tax effects of a portfolio for their customers, they generally do not. The concept behind brokerage is usually the selection of individual stocks for purchase or sale, not the creation and maintenance of a diversified portfolio. Consequently, recordation of basis and monitoring gains and losses of securities--as components of a portfolio as opposed to as individual investments--would be unusual and is generally not available in most standard brokerage accounts. If a customer does obtain that advice, if it is available at all from the broker, it is usually expensive.

Brief Summary Text (41):

7. Failure to Limit Portfolio Characteristics. Currently, brokerage is permitted in some self-directed retirement accounts established by employers (such as 401(k)s), but not permitted in many. The reason, in part, is that employers are concerned that employees, especially somewhat less sophisticated employees, will not fully appreciate the risks of investing and may invest in too risky a security, or not a sufficiently diversified portfolio, and therefore potentially lose much or all of their expected retirement. Consequently, employers limit the choices that employees may select by offering them a limited number of investment choices, which because employers want to provide diversification within each investment vehicle so offered has generally meant, almost exclusively, various types of funds. Brokerage has not been offered because there was no way to ensure that an employee would invest in a diversified portfolio with specified maximum risk levels (hence the practice of forcing employees to invest in selected funds).

Brief Summary Text (44):

ITG-Posit is an electronic equity-matching system that lets investors find the other side of a trade during the market day. Posit utilizes mid-point pricing. Buy and sell orders, including individual stocks and portfolios, are entered into the system; five times daily, Posit processes and compares the orders. Posit trades are then priced at the midpoint of the bid/offer spread (the difference between the best seller's asking price and the best buyer's bid) in the stock's primary market when the match is run. Those orders which match are executed. Investors can keep unmatched orders in the system for future matches or can electronically route the order to any one of the primary or regional exchanges, to OTC market makers, or complete the order on an agency basis. Posit is used by major institutions and broker/dealers. Posit, like the OptiMark.TM. trading system, is in essence a matching system but Posit matches trades at the mid-point (as determined by a third party system) without independent price discovery. It is premised on traders wishing to trade with each other and provides such traders a potentially better

execution (because of the mid-point cross) with lower market impact (because of the anonymity of the trades and the increased available liquidity based on the concentration of trades within certain time frames).

Brief Summary Text (46):

Schwab, Financial Engines (and perhaps Microsoft) provide services that assist investors (such as a participant in a 401(k) plan) in selecting a mutual fund or creating a portfolio of mutual funds by selecting from among a group of mutual funds available to the participant based on risk/return and other factor analysis. Once the analysis is complete, the participant then selects mutual funds for his portfolio according to what is permitted by his participation rules (if it is a 401(k) plan) or through brokers or others offering the funds. Although for Financial Engines and Microsoft there currently is no direct mechanism for actually executing the desired purchases of fund interests, Schwab does make available the ability to purchase interests in the funds directly through Schwab. There is no mechanism, however, for enabling the participant to select, craft, modify and execute a portfolio comprising individual equities: Such an investment in equities is a completely different form of investment from an investment in funds where, before the present invention, it has not been possible for a smaller investor to acquire or trade individual equities in small or fractional amounts on a cost-effective basis or to manage individual equities as an integrated portfolio as opposed to a series of individual investments.

Brief Summary Text (47):

Portfolio (or cash) management accounts and similar vehicles exist and are offered by a number of brokerages. They are somewhat mislabeled, however, in that they do not manage portfolios of securities, but simply combine in one reporting statement information regarding various types of assets held by a customer (funds, stocks, bonds, cash, etc.) and consolidate broker relationships. These accounts primarily involve linking of various types of services including credit card, loan, checking/savings, brokerage and mutual fund holdings.

Brief Summary Text (49):

Systems exist that allow a user to screen the portfolios of certain other parties, primarily certain investment managers that file documents with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These systems do not create mechanisms for investors of a system to screen characteristics of other investors of the system (such as patent lawyers or individuals making more than \$75,000) to obtain a composite portfolio or a portfolio comprising composite characteristics of these other investors. Systems exist that are designed to create derivatives and futures that permit investors to obtain the market risk economic benefits of a portfolio investment similar to that of the current invention. These systems, however, are not currently permitted in the United States for regulatory reasons, introduce credit risk related to the issuer of the derivative/future, provide for different and adverse tax consequences compared to those offered by using the current invention, do not provide for the exercise of shareholder rights, do not permit the selection of particular stocks reflecting non-economic preferences (such as "no-tobacco"), and generally do not substitute at all for the current invention.

Brief Summary Text (51):

Some systems, like Financial Engines, provide tools for investors to select a number of mutual funds to satisfy certain investment goals. These systems do not provide tools to select a portfolio of individual stocks that, as a portfolio, would satisfy certain investment goals. Moreover, the systems that exist that review mutual funds do not review or analyze mutual funds in combination with individual securities, which is more likely reflective of the actual overall investments held by a smaller investor.

Brief Summary Text (52):

The present invention is therefore directed to the problem of developing a method

and apparatus for enabling an individual or smaller investor, or an investor investing a smaller amount, to create and manage, on a cost-effective basis, a complex portfolio of securities.

Brief Summary Text (54):

The present invention solves the problem of individual or smaller investors (which includes investors investing a smaller amount and collectively referred to herein as "investors"), creating and managing on a cost-effective basis a complex portfolio of securities. The present invention does this by providing a computer-based system to which the investor provides his preferences, which system generates a portfolio that reflects the investor's preferences or assists the investor in selecting a portfolio, allows that portfolio to be modified by the investor as a whole portfolio and allows the investor to direct that the portfolio or specified individual securities in the portfolio be purchased or sold or modified as a portfolio transaction. The system further aggregates orders generated by other investors at various times during the day for execution, and includes a device for such execution with investors being allocated specific interests, including small numbers of (and fractional shares, if needed in) securities. The system further nets the various transactions so aggregated to provide even better execution and even lower costs.

Brief Summary Text (55):

According to one aspect of the present invention, a system for enabling multiple individual or smaller investors to create, manage and trade a portfolio of assets/liabilities includes a processor and a storage device. The processor communicates with the investors via multiple communication links, and receives investor identification information and preferences and trading data from each of the investors. The processor aggregates all buy or sell orders and all otherwise economically unviable buy and sell orders for each asset/liability in the trading data from each of the investors to obtain a single economically viable buy order and a single economically viable sell order for each asset/liability. (As used herein, economically unviable orders include fractional shares, odd lots, and small amounts of shares that cannot be normally traded, or cannot be normally traded on a cost-effective basis.) The processor then transmits the single economically viable buy order and the single economically viable sell order to a third party for execution. The storage device is coupled to the processor and stores the trading data from each of the investors.

Brief Summary Text (56):

In addition, the processor creates a percentage allocation of investment classes for each investor based on allocation model input from each investor and transmits a resulting percentage allocation of investment classes to each investor. Furthermore, the processor interacts with each investor to determine an investor portfolio that corresponds to the percentage allocation of investment classes for the investor. The processor includes in determining its allocations any investments currently held by the investor, including investments in mutual funds or other funds as well as already owned individual securities, and includes these investments for the purposes of determining the overall portfolio characteristics of the investor's investments.

Brief Summary Text (57):

One particularly advantageous embodiment of the above system includes an electronic payment mechanism coupled to the processor and for coupling to a third party electronic payment system. The electronic payment mechanism transmits a request for an electronic payment for each of the investors to the third party payment system, and receives, in response to the request, electronic payment data for each of the investors electronically from the third party payment system. In addition, the electronic payment mechanism maintains multiple payment accounts, one for each of the investors. Furthermore, the electronic payment mechanism only permits trading of the assets/liabilities for a particular investor if the particular investor's

payment account contains a predetermined amount. Moreover, the storage is coupled to the electronic payment mechanism and stores the electronic payment data for each of the investors, and the payment accounts for the investors.

Brief Summary Text (59):

In addition, the system of the present invention optionally includes an investor program executing on an investor's personal computer, which program prompts the investor for investor identification information and investor preferences, transmits investor identification and investor preferences to the processor, and enables the investor to interact with the processor to select multiple assets/liabilities to create an investor portfolio commensurate with the percentage allocation of investment assets. The investor program can include a graphical investor interface displaying a risk and a differential return of the entire investor portfolio relative to standard industry measurements to the investor and on absolute scales. Also, the investor program enables the investor to adjust the percentage allocation of investment assets and the investor portfolio. Moreover, the investor program communicates to the processor as trading data via one of the communication links investor identification information along with any trades of assets/liabilities to be executed to create or modify an investor's portfolio to ensure an investor's actual portfolio matches an investor's desired portfolio.

Brief Summary Text (63):

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, the trading data can include fractional shares of the assets/liabilities desired to be traded.

Brief Summary Text (64):

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, the investor program maintains tax basis information, including date of acquisition, for all of the assets/liabilities traded by the investor. The investor program can also provide information to the investor regarding voting rights of the assets/liabilities held by the investor.

Brief Summary Text (65):

According to one aspect of the present invention, the processor receives actual trading pricing information regarding the single buy order and the single sell order for each of the assets/liabilities from the third party trading system. The processor then transmits the actual trading pricing information regarding each asset/liability traded by a particular investor to the particular investor. In response to the actual trading pricing information received by a particular investor, the investor program modifies the display of the risk and differential return of the entire investor portfolio in accordance with the actual trading pricing information regarding each asset/liability traded by the investor. Based on this information, the investor program recommends modifications to the investor portfolio to the investor via the graphical investor interface to make the investor portfolio match the percentage allocation previously determined if the investor portfolio no longer matches the percentage allocation as a result of the actual trading pricing information received from the processor.

Brief Summary Text (67):

According to another aspect of the present invention, a personal computer based program for executing on an investor's personal computer, for enabling an investor to create, manage and trade a portfolio of assets/liabilities and for interfacing with a system for managing a plurality of such investors via a first communication link over which the investor transmits to the system trading data regarding trades of at least one asset/liability that the investor desires to make, includes the following elements. A graphical investor interface prompts the investor for investor identification information, and investor preference data. An asset allocation modeling process creates a percentage allocation of assets for the investor based on the investor preference data, wherein the graphical investor interface displays via the computer display multiple assets/liabilities among which

the investor can select to create an investor portfolio commensurate with the percentage allocation of assets. A risk and differential return calculation process calculates a risk and a differential return of the entire investor portfolio relative to standard industry measurements or absolute values, and provides the relative risk and differential return to the graphical investor interface, which displays the relative risk and differential return to the investor. A portfolio editor process enables the investor to adjust the investor portfolio. A communication process communicates the investor identification information along with any trades of assets/liabilities to be executed to create or modify an investor's portfolio to ensure an investor's actual portfolio matches an investor's desired portfolio to the system as said trading data via the first communication link. In this program, the graphical investor interface can display the relative risk and differential return as a color code, a numerical indicator, an arrow on a dial, or an arrow on a range of numerical values or an arrow on a horizontal or vertical scale.

Brief Summary Text (68):

According to another aspect of the present invention, the system permits the investor to adjust the color code, the numerical indicator, the arrow on a dial, or the arrow on a range of numerical values or the arrow on a horizontal or vertical scale, by moving a slide or other indicator on the graphical investor interface, and by so doing change the requested risk and return levels for the investor's preferred portfolio. Consequently, the investor can adjust the characteristics of the portfolio directly by changing the position of the indicator, and the system will then store the changed requested characteristics and select securities for inclusion or exclusion in or from the portfolio, or the weighting of such securities in the portfolio, based on matching the portfolio characteristics so selected by the investor with the portfolio characteristics of the investor's portfolio of securities. In this instance, the system will recommend or suggest to the investor the securities that should be included in the investor's portfolio that satisfy the investor's risk and return selections, combined with any other selections or preferences that the investor may have.

Brief Summary Text (69):

According to another aspect of the present invention, the system includes, in its differential risk and return calculations, securities and other investments, including funds, held by the investor that were not acquired through the system but that the investor notes or describes to the system, in determining the overall portfolio characteristics and in making recommendations or suggestions to the investor as to what other securities should be included in the investor's portfolio.

Brief Summary Text (70):

According to another aspect of the present invention, the system permits a sponsoring organization, such as an employer, to specify that all the investors in the system of that sponsoring organization (such as employees in the employer's 401 (k) plan) may invest using the system, but that their portfolio must all times meet certain specifications. The specifications could include a minimum number of stocks (such as 30), a maximum concentration in any particular stock (such as 5%) and a maximum risk level (such as no more than 10% more risky than the market as defined by the S&P 500 risk level). Similarly, the head of a household could establish investing accounts for members of the household with similar constraints or whatever other limitations along similar lines were desired.

Brief Summary Text (72):

According to another aspect of the present invention, a method for creating and managing a portfolio of assets or liabilities by performing a plurality of transactions, includes the steps of: a) obtaining investor preferences for portfolio characteristics of an investor; b) employing the portfolio characteristics to describe and select assets or liabilities to be transacted in

multiple transactions by an investor; and c) aggregating the transactions of a single investor with the transactions of other investors over an applicable characteristic of the assets or liabilities. In this case, the transactions can be aggregated over a time, such as every three hours, once per day, or multiple times per day at predetermined times. Once the transactions are aggregated, they are then executed.

Brief Summary Text (74):

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, an apparatus for enabling a plurality of investors to make periodic investments in a portfolio of securities includes a processor and a storage device. The processor receives data from each of the investors regarding amounts of money to be invested in each investor's portfolio, and accesses an electronic payment system upon receiving instructions from an investor to purchase securities to obtain payment for the required purchases. The storage unit stores each investor's portfolio. This apparatus can optionally include a third party trading system interface device that aggregates all investors' trades and sends the aggregated trades as a single trade in each security to a third party trading system, which orders can optionally be netted before sending them to the third party trading system.

Brief Summary Text (75):

The present invention also permits the collection of securities into pre-packaged portfolios that, if acquired by an investor, provide the investor all the advantages described before of directly owning the underlying securities while having a portfolio that reflects some strategy or preference determined by some other means. For example, a currently popular strategy is to invest in the ten of the thirty stocks comprising the Dow Jones Industrial Index that have performed the most poorly in the past calendar year. The expectation is that these ten stocks will then outperform the index in the succeeding calendar year. Consequently, currently, investors wishing to follow this strategy generally purchase an interest in a unit investment trust. Each year the trust liquidates and an investor wishing to continue the strategy must purchase a new interest in a new trust in the next year. These trusts normally carry maintenance fees and are sold by brokers who charge a significant load for acquiring the trust unit. Moreover, the unit is dictated by the sponsor. If an investor wanted to buy the nine, instead of ten, stocks that most under performed, there is currently no good mechanism for doing so. In addition, the investor owns an interest in the trust, which has many of the same negative characteristics as a fund, described above. Therefore, according to yet another aspect of the current invention, the investor could simply click on a button on the graphical investor interface and receive a proposed portfolio consisting of a selected grouping of securities like the ten under performing stocks in the Dow Index. The investor could then keep that portfolio as suggested, or modify that portfolio if desired by eliminating one of the stocks (to create the nine aforementioned) or by adding another to create eleven, or by modifying the relative weightings of the ten etc. The portfolio would then be acquired for the investor just as if the investor selected the securities to be included in that portfolio through other means. In addition, the portfolio that is pre-packaged as a starting point for the investor could also be a portfolio recommended by another, such as an investing magazine's picks for the next few years, or an analyst or investment bank's selections, or an organization's preferences (such as the AFL-CIO's or the Business RoundTable's preferences or members), or even a famous person's selections. In each case the investor obtains the benefits of the system providing a portfolio of directly owned securities, as opposed to an interest in a fund or trust.

Brief Summary Text (77):

Once an affinity group is identified, the system can gather statistics for the investor noting, again hypothetically, that as a group, patent attorneys invest in high technology stocks. The system could then list the ten most frequently traded high technology stocks in which patent attorneys are interested. Similarly, the

system can gather statistics for the investor on what level of risk and return generally characterizes the current portfolio investing by economists, and then create a portfolio that matches those portfolio characteristics.

Brief Summary Text (78):

If an investor has a particular interest in a more specific affinity group, the investor might query the system of the present invention to provide all of the securities in which patent attorneys who specialize in mechanical engineering are investing. Again general groupings of securities could be presented or the top ten securities being traded by mechanical patent attorneys can be listed, or the portfolio characteristics can be selected and matched.

Brief Summary Text (80):

Once these affinity group investment characteristics and strategies are created, an investor can have the option of investing in the same portfolio (based on risk/return characteristics, identity of security characteristics, such as high tech, or individual securities or otherwise) as is listed for a particular affinity group. Thus affinity group investing can be supported by the system of the present invention. This again provides numerous options for unsophisticated investors, or those investors who simply wish to take advantage of the thought processes of a particular group of investors whose characteristics are selected by the investor.

Brief Summary Text (81):

An additional functionality of the present invention is to assess the relative performance of the portfolio of each affinity group. Since the securities either as groups (e.g., utilities) or individual stocks (e.g., Intel) can be analyzed over various periods of time based upon information stored in the securities database of the present invention such information can be provided to the investor. In this manner an investor might determine that Hollywood actors are better investors than patent attorneys.

Brief Summary Text (82):

An additional benefit of the present invention is that it allows for an investor to modify the investor's portfolio without selling all the securities held by the investor, but rather by simply modifying the portfolio. Consequently, as compared to an investment in funds where an investor may wish to switch from a Fidelity fund to a somewhat more risky Vanguard fund, where the investor currently has to sell the Fidelity fund (with possible tax consequences) to buy the Vanguard fund, under the present invention, the investor merely has to increase the risk level. According to one aspect of the present invention then, an investor that wishes to match the risk level (within possible limits) of a specified fund merely modifies the risk level of the given portfolio to do so. This can be accomplished by leveraging (margin) the current securities positions without having to sell any of the securities.

Brief Summary Text (83):

According to yet another aspect of the present invention, in order to permit the investor to understand and manage its portfolio on a whole, integrated basis, the investor would be permitted, for purpose of analyses, to aggregate the holdings in multiple accounts (such as an IRA, a 401(k), and a non-tax-advantaged account that the investor uses for investing). In this manner, the investor can view all its holdings in securities and other investments as a single integrated investment portfolio for purposes of determining risk levels, diversification, concentration, sector exposure, or otherwise. Consequently, the investor obtains the benefits of viewing its portfolio as an integrated whole, as opposed to a series of unconnected investments, even though for legal purposes the accounts are maintained as legally disparate and separate accounts. According to yet another aspect of the present invention, the same concepts of aggregating across legally disparate accounts could be employed in connection with other securities, primarily interests in funds, and even investments other than individual securities or funds, such as real estate,

gold or other investments, that an investor might hold.

Brief Summary Text (84):

In addition, individuals who wish to invest in securities, or who should invest in securities in order to achieve their financial goals, frequently are not sufficiently sophisticated enough to be familiar with the wide variety of technical terms and their meanings associated with such investing. For example the term "volatility" may have little meaning to a novice investor. Further, such an investor might have specific desires for stocks which might be expressed in terms of a desire to invest in "big companies" or "high tech" stocks yet the investor may not have a firm foundation for what these terms actually mean. In order to assist novice investors in taking advantage of the wide variety of capabilities of the present invention, a natural language interface is provided wherein an investor can pose investment preferences in terms with which the investor is comfortable. The natural language interface parses the input language of the investor into securities characteristics that would meet the investor's needs. For example, if the investor desires to invest only in "big companies," the natural language interface translates that desire into a query against annual revenues of companies in the securities database. Further, the term, "big companies" could then be determined to mean companies whose annual gross revenue is in excess of \$1 billion, for example. This in turn implicates only certain stocks in the generalized portfolio of securities in the system's database. Therefore, as a result of the investor's desire to invest in "big companies" a series of stocks would be selected and displayed to the investor which fits into the characteristics desired by the investor.

Drawing Description Text (5):

FIG. 4(A) depicts a sample portfolio editor screen according to the present invention and FIG. 4(B) depicts a sample portfolio selection screen with other portfolio starting points.

Drawing Description Text (6):

FIG. 5 depicts a sample output of the portfolio selection process of the present invention.

Drawing Description Text (8):

FIG. 7 depicts a flow chart of the graphical investor interface presented to the investor during the creation or modification of the portfolio according to the computer-based system of the present invention.

Drawing Description Text (10):

FIGS. 9-12 depict a flow chart of the processing occurring at a Web server in connection with creating or modifying a small sample portfolio according to the computer-based system of the present invention.

Drawing Description Text (11):

FIG. 13 depicts certain screens presented to an investor during various steps in the process of creating or modifying a portfolio according to the computer-based system of the present invention.

Detailed Description Text (2):

As used herein, assets, rights or liabilities refers to any tradeable commodity or item of value in which there exists a market for trading. This definition includes securities, equities, derivatives, currencies, fungible commodities, insurance contracts, mortgages, bonds, airline reservations, hotel reservations, golf tee times, country club memberships, antiques, etc. Although the computer-based system of the present invention can be used with regard to any asset or liability that is traded, the discussion herein relates primarily to its use in connection with securities for simplicity purposes.

Detailed Description Text (3):

As used herein, smaller investors includes generally any investor investing a smaller amount, regardless of whether an investor is an institution or an individual, and regardless of whether the investor is acting on its own behalf or on behalf of another. It would also include an investor investing through a financial planner, for example, who actually provides the inputs for and access to the system on behalf of the investor. The present invention consists of a computer-based system that provides smaller investors, a convenient and simple mechanism for investing small amounts including on a periodic basis, and a personal computer based or accessible program for managing a portfolio of securities, including the ability to make adjustments to the portfolio by selling or purchasing securities to modify the portfolio, for monitoring tax effects, for passing through voting rights of the securities and for delegating such rights to third parties at the discretion of the investor, for limiting parameters of portfolios if desired by the investor or another with authority over the account, and for analyzing investments held by the investor on an integrated, portfolio basis.

Detailed Description Text (4):

By aggregating orders that are otherwise economically unviable, such as odd lots, fractional shares and small orders, into one large order, the present invention creates an economy of scale that permits smaller investors to create, own and manage a portfolio of securities, i.e., an individual mutual fund-type of investment that is tailored to the specific preferences of each investor. By aggregating orders into one order the present invention permits costs to be based on a small fee relative to each economically unviable order, rather than even a small fee that would otherwise make placing the economically unviable order impractical. For example, if an individual or smaller investor can only afford to invest \$100 per month, and wants to create diversification, each time the investor invests in 30 stocks, he would have to pay, say \$5 for each order under existing deep discount brokerages (and that would be just the commission charge, not including the all-in-costs from wide spreads, etc.). Obviously, no one would pay \$150 to invest \$100. In contrast, the present invention permits the small investor to invest his \$100 per month because the entire order being placed by the system incurs one fee that is then distributed across the orders pro rata, hence a small order only incurs a small fee. For example, if the entire fee was 2% of the order, then the investor would owe \$2 for his \$100 investment.

Detailed Description Text (5):

The structure of the system of the present invention also allows its cost to be based on access to or usage of the system (such as a monthly fee of \$5) as opposed to according to securities orders entered into the system, as per common brokerage. The result is that the investor can cost-effectively create a portfolio of securities comprised of directly owned individual securities with attributes similar to a mutual fund, such as diversification, but with advantages, such as tax advantages, over a mutual fund.

Detailed Description Text (6):

The underlying purpose and principal theme embodied in the computer-based system of the present invention is that investors should be able to invest in tradeable assets as a portfolio instead of as a collection of individual assets. In other words, as portfolio theory teaches, the value of an asset to a portfolio is different from the value of the asset by itself; the computer-based system of the present invention, therefore, permits investors to make investment decisions based on the effect on the investor's portfolio, and to create and maintain a diversified portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (7):

The computer-based system of the present invention as compared to funds, among other things, provides: 1. Complete control for the investor over what securities can be selected, and in what weights and amounts. 2. Control over the tax effects

of purchases or sales of the securities included in the portfolio, preventing the investor from being presented with unwanted taxable gain due to discretionary sales transactions of fund managers. 3. All the information necessary to monitor and manage tax effects and the capability to sell or buy the individual securities in his portfolio to obtain desired tax benefits. 4. All shareholder rights with respect to each security in the portfolio to the investor and full ownership and control over all investment, voting and other decisions regarding such securities. 5. Direct control over the charges and expenses that will be incurred. 6. The possibility of making multiple and intra-day investment decisions by the investor, if he wishes. 7. Control over all factors in the portfolio and modification of them as the investor sees fit.

Detailed Description Text (8):

Furthermore, compared to existing brokerage services, the computer-based system of the present invention: 1. (a) Reduces costs because the system aggregates order flow, limits the number of actual trades that need to be made external to the system, directs investors to specified securities to further concentrate the order flow, and automates the input process. (Consequently, the system's charges to the investors for the creation of a portfolio can be far less--on the order of one to two orders of magnitude less--as compared to even deep discount or non-discount brokers, respectively.); and (b) Enables an investor to select individual securities reflecting his preferences to be included within a diversified portfolio by stepping the investor through all the issues for creating and managing a diversified portfolio and by providing the method and apparatus necessary to create and manage such a portfolio. 2. Enables an investor to acquire fractional and small numbers of shares, thereby permitting the cost-effective creation and maintenance of smaller, but diversified, portfolios. As a result, the computer-based system of the present invention permits even a very small investor to create and own a diversified portfolio of securities (or any other assets or liabilities) for any amount, even if all of the shares are fractional amounts!

Detailed Description Text (9):

The computer-based system of the present invention permits, without incurring any additional costs, investors to purchase or sell small--and even fractional--units of shares. This is because, according to one embodiment of the computer-based system of the present invention, the system aggregates orders provided by its investors, executes the aggregated transactions and then allocates the acquired (or cash for sold) shares back to the accounts of the investors. (Since transactions outside of the system must still be made in full share amounts, it is possible that a fractional share amount could remain after the allocations. For example, $71/2$ shares of a stock in total could be allocated to 15 different accounts--with $1/2$ share allocated to each. To effect this transaction, if the shares are acquired from outside the system, the broker operating the system would acquire 8 shares. The remaining $1/2$ share would be owned by the broker or a third party worker with the broker operating the system and held for allocation as needed in subsequent rounds of trading.) Consequently, an investor could have \$150 per week invested in 50 stocks, receiving an allocation to his account of fractional shares. Each subsequent week, the investor would have added to his account additional fractional interests in each of these stocks. Over the course of a year with, for example, about \$7,800 invested, the investor would have full and fractional shares in his account (if the average stock price were \$30, the investor would have on average a little over 5 shares--5.2 shares to be precise--in each of 50 stocks). The system of the present invention permits that full investment each week (or any desired period) in a diversified portfolio, the transactions in small share interests, and the transactions in fractional interests (none of which is possible on a cost-effective basis with ordinary brokerage). According to another embodiment of the computer-based system of the present invention, the system could be maintained by a broker so that the orders of the investors are executed by the broker or a third party as principal, with the broker maintaining a position in the securities, and thereby, in essence, aggregating the orders of the investors as contra-side

transactions of the broker. Periodically, the broker could then execute an off-setting trade in the marketplace if the broker did not wish to carry the position.

3. Enables an investor to select individual securities reflecting preferences to be included within a diversified portfolio, and provides the information and tools necessary to create this type of portfolio for a low cost. The tools can also include "pre-packaged" or "celebrity" or other selected portfolios that can be further modified by the investor, or portfolios reflecting the portfolios or portfolio characteristics of specified affinity groups or other selected investors.

4. Enables reduced transactions costs by accepting customer orders entered at any time and aggregating them for trading. The computer-based system of the present invention holds the orders (except for those for which immediate execution is desired by the customer) until particular times, such as for example, at least three times per day (the "open" for any orders received since the last close of business, "mid-day" for all orders received during the morning, and the "close" for all orders received during the afternoon). The number of times orders could be traded is in general not limited, and depends to some extent on the number of investors, and the degree of risk or principal positioning that the broker wishes to accept. The computer-based system of the present invention takes all the orders that have been entered with it and, at the specified time, aggregates those orders for the purpose of reducing the number of transactions that would have to be executed, thereby reducing transaction costs and providing benefits to investors.

5. Enables superior trade execution of orders through netting. Furthermore, the computer-based system of the present invention includes the capability of netting orders against each other. The remaining orders that cannot be matched are executed internally (to the extent the system is making a market in the securities being traded) or forwarded for execution to a third party execution system (such as an exchange or a market maker).

6. Monitors portfolio based tax effects. In contrast to the prior art, the underlying concept of the computer-based system of the present invention relates to the creation of a portfolio. In that context, the monitoring of the portfolio for tax effects is an adjunct to the transaction history and portfolio monitoring is part of the system. Consequently, the computer-based system of the present invention can track the basis and acquisition date in each of the securities in the portfolio and use that basis to determine the tax consequences for the individual securities and the portfolio as a whole at any point in time.

7. Assists in the exercise of shareholder rights. Because the computer-based system of the present invention is designed to assist with regard to portfolios, including the exercise of shareholder rights regarding the portfolio securities, the computer-based system of the present invention offers assistance to investors in the form of aggregating not only their order execution, but also their voting or other rights. Consequently, an investor can obtain information in connection with his portfolio as to how securities could be voted by a service that analyzes the securities in the portfolio. The investor is permitted to direct that the voting be delegated to such service (or other services if multiple services are made available).

8. Permits the establishment of portfolio parameters. Because the computer-based system of the present invention is designed to assist in the creation of portfolios comprised of individual securities as opposed to the acquisition of individual securities as such, the portfolios can have limits imposed on them to facilitate "informed" or "reasonable" investing as determined by a plan sponsor or other party. Such parameters can be such that the portfolio must be diversified and not too risky, for example (in other words, it must have a set minimum number of stocks, such as 30, satisfying certain criteria, with no one stock accounting for more than 5% of the portfolio's value, and the overall risk in the portfolio not being in excess of a specified amount, such as 110%, of the S&P 500 risk level).

Detailed Description Text (11):

A block diagram of the process flow according to an exemplary embodiment of the computer-based system of the present invention is depicted in FIG. 1. The system 10 includes an asset allocation model 1, a portfolio selection editor 2, a web server 3 with storage 4, a database of tradeable assets or liabilities 6, a third party

trading system 5 coupled to a clearinghouse 8, and a third party payment system 7. Information is provided by the investor to the computer-based system 10 through a graphical investor interface, which is shown in FIG. 1 in two parts as the asset allocation model 1 and the portfolio selection editor 2.

Detailed Description Text (12):

In the asset allocation model 1; an investor is first queried for answers to a series of questions that determine investor data (e.g., name, address, payment information, etc.), the investor's risk tolerance and financial goals and objectives, the investor's current assets and liabilities, the investor's current and expected income and current and expected expenditures and time frames (e.g., college education for children within 10-15 years, care of a parent within 5-10 years), the investor's preferred risk-return characteristics, the investor's preferences for various types of securities and preferred portfolio mix, and various other items. There are a variety of different outputs for the asset allocation model. One formulation is an amount that the investor should invest in long-term investments, medium-term investments, and short-term investments. The asset allocation model determines a percentage allocation in each of the general investment types according to a set of known tables. There are many existing asset allocation models, any of which can be employed in the present invention, such as that provided by Quicken.TM., Mentun Investment.TM. from The Mentum Corporation and perhaps Financial Engines (www.financialengines.com).

Detailed Description Text (15):

Once this percentage allocation is generally determined, the system enables the investor, as described below, to select a portfolio of tradeable assets or liabilities. This selection involves providing among other things an indication of the historical levels of risk and returns of the tradeable assets or liabilities to the investor as a portfolio of investments.

Detailed Description Text (16):

Once the investor selects his desired portfolio based on his various preferences as to specific assets or liabilities to be included in the portfolio, that portfolio may include different historical and expected levels of return than necessary to achieve the investor's stated financial goals. Consequently, the present invention provides an indication to the investor that these selections now require a modification of either the investor's specific asset/liability preferences or the percentage allocation to reach his investment objectives. The system does this by comparing the historical and expected rates of returns of the investor's portfolio to the rates of return assumed in the asset allocation models using known probabilistic methods including value at risk and sensitivity analysis, and when determining a difference exists, suggesting an adjustment in the percentage allocation to correct for the difference so that the desired financial goals can be achieved within the constraints set by the investor. To the extent these goals cannot be achieved, the present invention informs the investor that the risk return levels are not sufficient to reach the established goals. Moreover, the system provides further information to the investor as to what returns and levels of investment would be necessary to satisfy various financial goals modified to take into account the investor's risk preferences as provided to the system.

Detailed Description Text (17):

In addition, the asset allocation model to be used utilizes probabilistic estimates of the likelihood of meeting those goals given various asset allocations. In the case where the investor steps through this series of inquiries in the asset allocation model--which, as noted, is optional--the investor is presented with an output that is then used as an input to the next stage: namely, building the specific portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (18):

One unique feature of the present invention is shown by the distinction to the

normal use of an asset allocation model, even one utilizing probabilistic returns such as Financial Engines. Under the present invention, the amount to be allocated to various asset classes is informed and is dynamically adjusted by the investor's preferences--not just the investor's demographic and asset/liability/income/expenditure information. By way of example, take two investor's who are identical in every respect regarding their assets and income and expected income from their jobs, their liabilities and expected expenditures, and financial goals for retirement, etc., except for their risk tolerance and preferences. One investor is very risk adverse, the other very willing to take risks. The usual asset allocation models would prescribe identical allocations to each. Adding probabilistic determinations as to the performance of various asset classes or various assets, such as mutual funds, simply allows a finer tuning and more accurate use of the asset allocation model. In other words, it simply ensures that when the determination is made to invest in a fund that returns an equity level investment, that the fund so invested in actually is expected to provide that return. It would still generate identical results for the general asset allocation or specific asset allocation, because it uses the information as to the investor's goals--and the asset's probabilistic returns--to arrive at a model of what asset is needed to satisfy the investor's goals. It does not use the investor's own risk tolerance in a dynamic manner to adjust the asset allocation model. But if, for example, some significant allocation in equities is necessary to reach the specified financial goals, and the investor who is very risk adverse is unwilling or reluctant to invest in equities that have ordinary market risk, it will be important to adjust the allocation and the actual equity portfolio in which the investments will be made. In other words, while the non-risk adverse investor may have, as an example, one-sixth of his investable assets in money market or short-term instruments, one-third in high risk equities, and one-half in intermediate risk instruments, it may be necessary for the risk-adverse investor to, contrary to expectations, have a portfolio that has more equities--but ones with lower risk--to satisfy both his financial goals and his perception of risk. Thus, the system of the present invention provides the asset allocation model with additional risk preference information that can be acted upon precisely through specific security portfolio allocation, as opposed to the typical asset allocation model that simply provides for an allocation to "equities" or to "funds" and then finds the equities or funds that satisfy the average as determined by the model, without being able to distinguish between--or create and act on--specific portfolios of equities that will be optimal for the investor taking into account, on a dynamic basis, the actual risk preferences, as opposed to only the financial goals and related factors, of the investor.

Detailed Description Text (19):

Notwithstanding this potential benefit, an investor could completely skip that portion of the interface involved in the asset allocation determination, and move directly to creating a portfolio, such as by stating that the investor wishes to invest in equities and would like to create a portfolio based on stated preferences. In this case, the investor enters those preferences just as an investor starting with the asset allocation determination would have entered these preferences, but without seeking the allocation, or the investor can select from a number of other portfolio creating starting points, such as pre-packaged portfolios, celebrity portfolios, affinity group portfolios, or portfolios suggested or recommended by the system based on the investor's risk and return preferences as generally stated by the investor. The portfolio screens enable selection of securities based on type of business or industry, stock volatility, capitalization, inclusion in various indices, book-to-earnings ratio or other financial measures, corporate governance or other matters, etc. The other portfolio creation starting points would consist of portfolios such as various indices (or subsets of various indices that generally reflect the risk--return characteristics of the indices), various strategies, such as the ten stocks in the Dow Jones Industrial Index that underperformed during the last calendar year, or other strategies embodied in various unit investment trusts, celebrity portfolios

reflecting the portfolios of famous people or analysts or others, or portfolios encompassing recommendations from investing magazines or newsletters or other sources, or portfolios reflecting screened risk--return characteristics from various affinity groups that can be created by the investor, such as the portfolio characteristics of managers with more than \$200,000 income, securities lawyers living in Washington, D.C., engineers in Silicon Valley, commercial bank officers or other groups (all aggregated and with permission to protect privacy). An exemplary screen for inputting criteria for selecting the securities in the portfolio is depicted in FIGS. 4(A) and 4(B).

Detailed Description Text (20):

FIG. 5 depicts an exemplary output of the selection, in which each of the forty securities are equally weighted in the portfolio in terms of dollars invested in each security, which such exemplary portfolio could have been obtained through the investor's screening of stocks as part of the screening selection criteria based on book value, etc. pre-packaged portfolios, etc. affinity portfolios, etc. all as modified by the investor. Other variations are possible, and they can depend upon the price of the underlying security, and the total numbers of securities available, and the combined risk factor desired for the entire portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (21):

To accomplish this selection, the portfolio editor 2 accesses the web server 3, which in turn accesses the database 6 of equities, bonds, etc. This database is constantly updated with pricing, capitalization, price to earnings ratio, etc. from various stock reporting services known in the art. Each relevant factor of a security is associated with that security. When the investor establishes criteria for his portfolio, each of the relevant factors for each security in the database is compared to the criteria, and if they match the security is either included or excluded from the portfolio depending on the particular criterion.

Detailed Description Text (22):

As an example, an investor might have stated that he wished to invest solely in large capitalization, software, financial services and entertainment companies based in the United States with no negative corporate governance factors. The system then returns a listing of stocks, including obvious ones that are household names and some that are not. The system then specifies percentages of each stock to allocate to the portfolio in order to insure a reasonable level of diversification (and would alert the investor if that could not be done). One example would be dividing the total dollar amount being invested by the number of securities meeting the criteria entered by the investor and allocating an equal dollar amount or a capitalization-weighted dollar amount to each of the securities, and if there were fewer than twenty securities for example, indicating to the investor that reasonable levels of diversification were not necessarily achieved. It should be noted that other levels of diversification could be used as well.

Detailed Description Text (23):

In addition, the system specifies the level of risk for the portfolio and suggests changes to satisfy the investor's preferences. As an example, if there were insufficient companies in the above list, the system would suggest either relaxing the capitalization standard, or including more industries, such as communications, which could be viewed as similar to the non-manufacturing industries selected by the investor.

Detailed Description Text (24):

In conjunction with certain of these screens, the investor is provided with a response that shows the investor, graphically and/or with text and/or number representations, the results of the investor's selections. An exemplary portfolio is depicted in FIG. 5. The results include a comparison of the historical inherent risk in the selected portfolio relative to known standards, such as the S&P 500, and the riskiness from the perspective of lost principal, etc. of the portfolio for

specified periods or through specified formulas.

Detailed Description Text (25):

The investor next specifies the dollar amount to be invested in this portfolio. The investor's order is then aggregated with the orders of other investors (or the broker becomes the aggregator by executing the order and taking a position in the stocks). To purchase the defined portfolio, the investor must have assets on hand or credit to acquire the securities, which can be obtained through any of various mechanisms, such as a direct deposit to the system, through a check or electronic funds transfer (EFT) to the broker operating the system, by arranging credit to be extended (including on a temporary basis while the order is being settled), or by having cash or other securities to be sold on hand from previous transactions, etc. Those systems that involve third parties are depicted in the figures as the third party payment system 7. One of the options offered by the system is a money market fund for excess cash, as well as a linked debit card, credit card, check writing facility to reach funds in the investor's account and other ordinary and known cash management services.

Detailed Description Text (26):

The system electronically executes the needed transaction at the next transaction window (which could be set at the discretion of the system operator (the broker or bank running the system), such as when a certain market exposure such as when \$10,000 or more of a long position in a security or aggregation of securities in portfolios is reached, or at set times such as three times a day) to create the specified portfolio for the investor. This transaction is performed in two steps. First, the orders of all investors are aggregated within the system 10 (with the system operator potentially pre-aggregating some orders as principal, such as by executing against itself all orders of less than \$1000 and then aggregating these orders as one larger order that it executes for itself) and then netted against each other, again within the system 10, to the extent consistent with then applicable regulations. Then, if the system is not part of a broker making a market in the securities, the excess trades are electronically sent to a third party trading system, such as the OptiMark.TM. trading system. If the system is part of such a broker making a market in the securities, then the broker executes the excess trades directly. This portfolio creation and execution, with aggregation in connection with the transactions (in transaction windows with or without the broker engaging in some pre-aggregation) and with or without netting, of customized orders of individual securities for smaller investors--the ability actually to effect the transaction and create and manage the portfolio of securities--allows investors to obtain advantages over ordinary brokerage and over selecting and investing in mutual funds, and over those systems that purport to monitor portfolios, either of securities or of funds.

Detailed Description Text (27):

The computer-based system of the present invention includes the capability to allocate suggested holdings to the investor to create a diversified portfolio (which likely will include fractional share interests in stocks). The portfolio created by the computer-based system of the present invention provides the investor the benefits of modern portfolio management theory and does so in the context of a system that allows for the creation and maintenance of the portfolio for a cost that is reasonable in light of the portfolio's size.

Detailed Description Text (28):

Additional funds can be added to purchase additional stocks, or amounts of existing stocks, in the portfolio, with such funds being added automatically out of direct deposits of paychecks, for example, or sales of part or all of the portfolio can be effected, numerous times a day. If the investor wishes to add or sell specified stocks, for example for tax purposes where the investor wishes to obtain a taxable loss, the system informs the investor of the effects of the change on the portfolio's diversification and risk levels, etc. But (unless there is some

restriction imposed by an employer for example) the investor has complete control and can determine to create a completely non-diversified portfolio comprising only one or a few stocks, if desired, by selecting to have the system acquire, or the portfolio consist exclusively after sales of, only those stocks. Additionally, any of the preferences specified by the investor can be adjusted and made effective numerous times a day. If the investor changes his preferences, the system will review the investor's current holdings and suggest changes to reflect the new preferences, including any changes in, or to maintain, desired risk/return levels. Similarly, as the actual experience of the securities in the portfolio changes (and obviously in the case of a company, for example, that is acquired and its securities are replaced with cash), the system may suggest changes even if the investor's preferences have not changed.

Detailed Description Text (29):

The system can be accessed by the investor from a main frame or server at a distant location with the investor utilizing a direct dial-up connection or Internet access, through an intermediary such as a bank or broker, or the invention can be embodied in part on the investor's computer with the investor linking to the distant site through any of these access means to obtain specific information and provide information needed to execute trades. In other words, much of the processing can be completed "off-line" with the connection to the server being required only to obtain updated data or to send an order for a portfolio modification, or completely "on-line" depending on how much of the present invention is made resident on the investor's computer.

Detailed Description Text (34):

FIG. 7 depicts one possible flow chart of the graphical user interface presented to the investor during the creation or modification of the investor's portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (38):

Screen 3 (24) provides a listing of options for the investor (e.g., create a new account, provide preferences, modify existing portfolio preferences, purchase or sell a specific security, provide wire transfer or other instructions, engage in tax review or planning, monitor price changes in the portfolio, establish weekly dollar contributions to the portfolio for "dollar averaging" or other purposes). The investor is also provided the option to navigate through the site and skip over subsequent screens if the investor wishes (as would be expected of experienced investors seeking to modify or simply review an existing portfolio). Program flow then proceeds to screen 4 (25).

Detailed Description Text (42):

Screen 5 (26) provides for the new investor, or for an existing investor who wishes to modify a portfolio to change preferences, a screen that provides a menu of preferences to set (see FIG. 4 for an example). The menu includes listings for preferences that relate to, among other things (and to be modified over time as investor choice dictates): type of security by market capitalization, book-to-market, price-earnings ratio, price of stock, geographic sector, product sector, dividend payout, historic price to current price, earnings growth and similar economic factors, and non economic factors such as specific business lines (for example, tobacco, managed health care or defense that may be viewed as of interest or controversial), engaging in business in particular countries (such as Burma or China or Northern Ireland and ratings from third party sources as to how the selected companies have performed in those countries), executive compensation and other corporate governance factors that are rated by third parties, etc. Depending on which factors the investor selects in this screen as being of interest, the investor is then presented with other choices through, for example, drop down menus or supplemental screens that review the specifics of the selections and solicit additional choices. For example, if the investor selects market capitalization as a factor in the selection of stocks for the portfolio, a drop down menu allows the investor to select a variety of capitalizations (e.g., eight ranges could be

presented, such as a market value of less than \$25 million, \$25 to 100 million, \$100 to 500 million, \$500 million to \$1 billion, \$1 to 2.5 billion, \$2.5 to 5 billion, \$5 billion to 10 billion, or over \$10 billion) which could be selected by pointing a mouse and clicking. If the investor wished to obtain more information, such as a sample of companies within each range, then the investor would select "more information" or a similar box. The investor is then presented with a screen that provides the additional detail that was requested.

Detailed Description Text (44):

Referring to FIG. 4B, alternatively, or additionally, the computer-based system of the present invention also allows the investor to be presented with suggested portfolios created through other means--such as a recommended portfolio that reflects a specified strategy, such as the ten under performing stocks from the Dow Jones Industrial Index, or from a selected analyst, or from a magazine or other publication, or from a selected organization or through collaborative techniques. As shown in FIG. 4B, the investor can select from a category of portfolios 71-76, under each of which the investor can then select a particular type of portfolio within that category. For example, the investor can select an average portfolio for people with the same number of children as the investor by selecting "Similar Demographics" 74 and then "Number of Children" 77.

Detailed Description Text (45):

As further examples, a noted analyst may state that her ideal portfolio would be the following fifty stocks in the following proportions, or a magazine may give its picks for the "ideal" portfolio, or a charitable-organization may provide a list of the corporations that have done the most for the charity, and individual donors to the charity may wish to build a portfolio of corporate contributors, or a union may wish to provide a list of companies it works with who it believes are good companies and may recommend that members acquire shares in those companies. In any of these types of cases, Screen 5 would make available the list of companies and the suggested allocations (or if no allocation is provided by the entity creating the list, then in accordance with appropriate diversification requirements, risk and other preferences of the investor, as provided previously). Furthermore, the computer-based system of the present invention automatically employs known collaborative filtering techniques, such as those utilized through a Firefly Network system (www.firefly.net) because the system already has the investor's preferences entered into the system. In this instance, the investor's preferences entered into the system are used to identify securities that may be of interest to the investor that have been specifically identified and transacted by others with similar preferences. Entire portfolios can be presented. For example, if an investor who enters preferences regarding certain types of stocks then separately determines to buy another specified stock, then if another investor enters similar preferences as the first investor, that second investor could be notified that an investor with similar preferences also specifically added for purchase this other security and the second investor may wish to consider adding it as well. In this manner, the system of the present invention can be used to facilitate the creation of diversified portfolios created by the equivalent of investment clubs.

Detailed Description Text (46):

In any of these pre-packaged, analyst, group or collaborative recommendations, the investor is able to select the entire portfolio as defined, and specify the dollar amount to be invested as per Screen 8 (29) (or if the investor has more securities to include then the investor would continue through with the program flow, or the investor could subtract specified securities from the suggested portfolio, such as by removing any tobacco stocks from the portfolio, or by changing the weighting of the securities in the portfolio as described in the program flow Screen 7 (28) below). Consequently, one of the investor's preferences and a screen available to the investor is a selection of suggested portfolios that represent prepackaged portfolio strategies, or are recommended by particular analysts, groups or others. Program flow then proceeds to screen 6 (27).

Detailed Description Text (47):

In each case, and in each of these screens, the investor is presented with a default set of preferences that the system recommends based on the investor's stated general goals and the investor information entered in earlier screens. For example, if an investor specified that he wished very little risk in his portfolio, and high dividend payout, but then selected capitalization exclusively under \$25 million, the system alerts the investor to the fact that there are insufficient companies that satisfy these preferences to create a reasonably diversified portfolio. The system then recommends that the investor permit the system to select from any size capitalization or suggest the investor change some of the other parameters that are constraining the choices, such as the dividend payout.

Detailed Description Text (48):

For those factors or parameters for which the investor wishes not to make a selection, the system uses defaults to create a portfolio that satisfies the other criteria, if any, that are selected by the investor. If no factors or parameters are selected at all, then the system creates a default portfolio based on the asset allocation, risk-return preference and other information, such as age and income, that the investor has provided the system. The number of different portfolios that the system can create is extremely large (almost limitless and in any event far in excess of the number of potential investors), and there is no expectation that any two investors would have identical portfolios (although they could if they so requested (such as members of a family that wish to have separate accounts but identical portfolios, or an individual that wishes to have multiple accounts (such as an IRA and a non-IRA account) with identical portfolios), or if two persons happened to make identical selections on all parameters, or used defaults in all cases with identical age and income ranges, etc.). Essentially, the system engages in an interactive process with the investor via the main server and the investor program executing on the investor's computer. The investor's program prompts the investor for the information needed by the main server to determine the portfolio or to create the asset allocation model. However, some of these selections made by the investor can affect the asset allocation model, such as limiting the volatility, which can cause the program to indicate that the investor must increase the allocation of resources to equities to achieve the desired investment goals. Consequently, the process can be viewed as either a two stage process, the first stage of which determines the asset allocation model, and the second stage of which enables the investor to select the desired securities in his portfolio, or as a single interactive process during which the investor selects both the general categories of investment vehicles and states his investment goals, which are often interrelated. If there are limits imposed (by a plan sponsor or employer perhaps, or by the investor itself for its own account or for another account over which the investor has authority (which could also be a corporate account or some other account where parameters are set by one entity and the actual trading or execution selection is made by another)), the limits would be made apparent in these screens and the investor directed to make choices that comply with the limits.

Detailed Description Text (49):

Screen 6 (27) then presents the investor with his choices and selections and seeks confirmation of the choices. If the investor wishes to modify any of the choices, the investor is then returned to the appropriate prior screen (such as Screen 4 (25) or screen 5 (26) depending on the parameter to be modified). If the investor confirms the choices, he moves to Screen 7 (28) which displays the portfolio. Program flow then proceeds to screen 7 (28).

Detailed Description Text (50):

Screen 7 (28) provides the investor with the selected portfolio (see FIG. 5 for an example). The portfolio can be presented in a number of different formats for the investor. Those formats include: a list of the actual stocks to be included, the relative percentages (see caveat below) each such stock comprises (by expected

dollar allocation) in the portfolio and the risk, relative to the average, of each such stock (see below); by type of security selected (such as the percentage that are in one range of market capitalization as opposed to another) and various other factors that reflect generally the factors that can be selected by the investor; and, by risk and performance of the portfolio as a whole.

Detailed Description Text (51):

Both risk and performance are based on the historical activity of the stocks and are presented graphically, with portfolios that are riskier than specified averages shown as such by volatility charts, and by words such as "this portfolio, on a historical basis, would lose or gain 10% of its value relative to the [specified] index 5 out of 100 trading days." The portfolio could also be displayed as expected values in dollar amounts based on historical returns and volatilities, with probabilities and sensitivity analyses being performed. The output could be a graph showing the expected distribution of the values (much like a bell shaped curve showing the average expected value and the tails showing the high and low expected values at specified levels of likelihood (or some particular numbers such as "this portfolio would be expected to double in value over ten years but there is also a five percent chance that it will be worth only 60% or less of its current value in ten years." When the portfolio is displayed as a list of securities to be included in the portfolio, the risk for each such security would be shown graphically, such as by a color or a bar next to the stock. As an example, the bar would be shaded one color (such as yellow) for stocks riskier than the average and another color (such as blue) for those less risky than the average (see FIG. 13 for an example), or the bars would extend to the right of each listed stock for those stocks that are less risky and to the left for those that are more risky. The longer the bar, the further it departs from the average. An investor wishing then to increase the level of riskiness in the portfolio can either return to the screen where risk levels are set with the result that the portfolio will be readjusted to be riskier, or select those stocks that contribute to higher levels of risk and increase the allocation to such stock, or add to the level of risk by specifying that margin should be used (in other words, that the investor will request a loan from the intermediary running the system or another source to acquire securities on a leveraged basis), thereby increasing the risk level of the portfolio. In addition, if the investor wished to make the portfolio similar in risk levels to some other portfolio, such as a fund that the investor was accustomed to investing in, or wished to make the portfolio more or less risky than that fund or some other portfolio, the investor would be given the opportunity to specify the precise risk level desired by inputting the desired risk level into the system, either by changing the position of the pointer on a dial, or another device described herein for specifying the overall risk level of the portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (52):

More generally, at this point, the investor can manually adjust the portfolio in whatever manner he sees fit by increasing or decreasing the selection of a particular stock, or by adding a stock that is not otherwise included in the portfolio and specifying the percentage to be allocated to that stock.

Detailed Description Text (54):

Screen 8 (29) provides the investor with final confirmation of the portfolio, and solicits from the investor the amount to be invested in this portfolio. The investor enters that information as a dollar amount. Because the precise prices at which the specific stocks are to be purchased will not be known until the time of purchase (if the system operator is not executing the order immediately and assuming the price movement risk as a pre-aggregator), the number of shares of any particular stock to be allocated to a particular portfolio needs to be somewhat approximate to accommodate price swings prior to the execution of the trade. With that caveat, the portfolio allocations and the specific securities to be purchased are then stored either in the storage facility on the investor's computer and when transferred to the main server stored there as well, or stored just in one

location. The precise number of shares to be purchased and allocated to this investor are determined at the next transaction window based on the then current prices for the stocks-as they are purchased for the account of that investor. The portfolio is then updated and stored by the system for access the next time the investor logs onto the system.

Detailed Description Text (58):

Screen 4 (33)--the first screen an investor sees after the log-on, assuming the investor selected alternatives from the "Screen 3-equivalent-toolbar" other than "create or modify a portfolio"--provides a menu of alternative services. Those services are varied, and depend to some degree on the investor. For example, offerings of securities pursuant to private placements can be made legally only to "accredited investors." Consequently, the system identifies those investors who are accredited investors and provides to them a menu item for reviewing private placement opportunities. Conversely, the system does not provide such a menu item to non-accredited investors who, under current law, cannot receive such offerings. Program flow then proceeds to screen 5 (34).

Detailed Description Text (59):

Screen 5 (34) is the operational screen for the services selected by the investor. If, for example, the investor wishes to evaluate the portfolio for tax effects, this Screen 5 (34) permits him to do so. The investor would specify in the tax effects communications menu the relevant parameters selecting from those available--such as stocks with losses, stocks with gains, long-term versus short-term gain or loss, combinations of the parameters, or all current tax positions. The system would then display for the investor the stock positions that satisfy the investor's parameters, with dollar amounts listed. Because of the way the system works--allowing for frequent additions of dollar amounts to the portfolio for strategies such as dollar cost averaging, and for frequent adjustments to the portfolio securities themselves, it is possible that an investor would have gains and losses in the same stock (for example, if the investor had bought 10 shares of a stock at \$20 and ten shares of the same stock at \$30 and the stock is now trading at \$25, the investor would have gains and losses in the stock when each transaction is viewed separately). In that instance, the system would display the stock as having both such gains and losses. The investor would then be presented with a series of options as to what he would like to do next. These options are smart options and context sensitive so that, for example, an investor is able to sell individual securities simply by highlighting those securities in the list and clicking a command something like "sell at next portfolio adjustment." The transaction is then added to the portfolio as an adjustment and executed at the next transaction window. If the investor wished to sell immediately, the investor would highlight the securities and click "sell immediately" (for which it is contemplated that an extra charge would be levied). In either case a confirmation window either pops-up confirming the investor's choice at that time, or the confirmation is deferred to the end (at the investor's option) when the investor confirms all requested actions.

Detailed Description Text (60):

The computer-based system of the present invention also provides tax preparation as it relates to transactions occurring through the invention. Specifically, as is necessary to provide the gain and loss information as described above, the computer-based system of the present invention tracks the tax basis information (including acquisition date) of securities purchased through the system and the sales price for such securities as well as any costs involved in maintaining the portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (62):

If the investor had selected in Screen 4 (33) another service, such as reviewing private placements if the investor is an accredited investor, or reviewing public offerings, or buying or selling specific securities outside of the portfolio, or

buying or selling other items that would be offered including, for example, other financial services such as insurance or commodities or futures if permitted by applicable law, or non-financial services such as books or software relating to investments, or if the investor wished to engage in chat room activities or discuss selected companies for which the system would host conversations with the executives of such companies, etc., the investor would enter any of those other services through this Screen 5 (34).

Detailed Description Text (65):

Screen 6 (35) lists the actions the investor determined to take in Screen 5 (34), to the extent the actions require a transaction of some sort, and then seeks confirmation of those actions. If the investor wishes to modify any actions he is returned to Screen 5 (34) for adjustments. After confirmation, any transactions are effected. The system processes and stores the information if it relates to a transaction or requires portfolio adjustments, etc.

Detailed Description Text (68):

FIGS. 9 and 10 show one of the strong advantages of the computer-based system of the present invention: namely that the number of trades that must be executed externally to the system to implement portfolio adjustments is reduced dramatically. As indicated in FIG. 11, Investor A wishes to buy 100 shares of security A, Investor B wishes to sell 50 shares of security A, and Investor C wishes to buy 150 shares of security A, giving a total of 250 shares of security A to be purchased and 50 shares of security A to be sold through the system of the present invention. The net result is that 200 shares of security A need to be purchased by the system of the present invention, which can be implemented with a single transaction.

Detailed Description Text (71):

In this example, the number of trades needed to execute portfolio creations or adjustments is reduced from 9 to 2 with netting and from 9 to 6 without netting. As a further example, assume the invention was employed on a system that was being used by 10,000 investors creating and maintaining their portfolios from a list of 750 stocks. Assume further, that each investor is engaging in just five transactions relating to his portfolio during a given period. The number of transactions that would normally have to be sent to an exchange or third party market maker or be executed by the broker as dealer would be 50,000. By contrast, employing the invention, the maximum number of trades the system would theoretically have to execute would be 1500 (two trades--a buy and a sell--in each stock) assuming no netting of buys against sells, and 750 (one trade in each stock) if there is netting of buys against sells, i.e., either a single buy or a single sell depending on whether the total number of shares being bought exceeded the total number of shares being sold or vice versa. In the first case, the computer-based system of the present invention saves the costs associated with 48,500 trades, and in the second case, the computer-based system of the present invention saves the costs associated with 49,250 trades--a ratio of over 30:1 in savings!

Detailed Description Text (73):

Graphical User Interface During Creation/Modification of Investor Portfolio

Detailed Description Text (74):

FIG. 13 depicts certain screens that may be presented to the investor during various steps in the process of creating or modifying a portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (75):

Screen A shows one form of a general presentation of the risk 55a and expected differential in return 56a of a chosen portfolio 57a of six stocks. The benefits of diversification can be obtained by using a number of securities in the portfolio, with the number usually being in excess of twenty. In actual operation then, the number of securities in the portfolio would generally be at least twenty or more

since, as noted, part of the purpose of the invention is to allow the benefits of diversification to be provided to the investor. Consequently, unless the investor determines otherwise, the number of securities in a portfolio will usually be at least twenty and generally would be materially higher.

Detailed Description Text (76):

As the investor increases or decreases the relative percentage of the stocks (six shown in this example) in the portfolio there will be a corresponding adjustment in the risk 55a and return 56a for the portfolio with the pointers 51a, 52a either moving up or down. In this example, the strips 53a, 54a along which the pointers 51a, 52a, respectively, move would be color-coded (much like a litmus testing strip). The color-coding will be used in connection with the presentation of the individual stocks in the portfolio as shown in Screen B. The pointers 51a, 52a could be a dial, or any other device for showing one value relative to another, and could be used with or without the color-coding.

Detailed Description Text (77):

Screen B shows a detail of Screen A with the stocks specified and their relative contributions to the portfolio and their respective risks 55b and differential returns 56b. An investor will instantly be able to determine which stocks are contributing higher levels of risks and presumably higher levels of returns to the portfolio and, if desired, adjust them to modify the risk/return levels in the portfolio (but see below). Obviously, a number of combinations will not be available as limited by the specific stocks selected. In that instance, the system generates a statement that the combination requested is not possible and suggests alternatives such as other securities (e.g., money market funds or preferred stocks or AAA-rated short-term notes, which in a real portfolio would be added to the mix in Screen A or B) that could lower overall risk and returns or leveraging (which would be shown as a bar increasing the risk of the portfolio) that could increase it, or different stocks with different characteristics, depending on what preferences the investor had earlier inputted into the system.

Detailed Description Text (78):

Alternatively, and importantly, the investor could adjust the pointers 51a, 52a in Screen A up or down (or the hand of a dial, or the color code on a litmus-type strip, etc.) and the system will recalculate the required mix of the portfolio's stocks. The investor may be required to adjust the overall mix of the securities in the portfolio in order to comply with limits established by a plan sponsor or employer, or the investor itself or by the investor on behalf of another over which the investor has authority (which could also be a corporate account or some other account where parameters are set by one entity and the actual trading or execution selection is made by another). This important dynamic interface is a major advantage of the system in that it allows investors to adjust their portfolios to desired risk--return characteristics by directly adjusting the risk and return pointers or dial or colors and having the system automatically determine what change in weighting of the securities comprising the portfolio is necessary to accommodate those desired characteristics. Thus, investors are afforded a simple click-of-a-mouse mechanism to adjust their entire portfolio to precisely the types of portfolio characteristics desired without having to know about the various interactions of securities with each other or the portfolio effects of changing one security or another or have any other knowledge! And as noted above, if the investor wished to make the portfolio similar, or greater or lesser, in risk levels to some other portfolio, the investor could specify the precise risk level desired by inputting the desired risk level into the system, through any of these means.

Detailed Description Text (79):

Screen B also shows the calculation of the risk (beta) 55b-55h and expected differential return levels 56b-56h for the stocks that are used to calculate the portfolio risk levels 53a and the expected differential returns 54a of the portfolio. It would also be made clear that a principal benefit of the computer-

based system of the present invention and the concept of using a portfolio for investing instead of individual stocks is the notion that the riskiness in any one stock held in a portfolio may be different from the riskiness of that stock held by itself (thereby generating some of the benefits that stem from diversification, etc.). Consequently, investors will be cautioned to focus on portfolio risk/returns, not individual stock risk/return. Again, then, there is a great advantage to investors as described above from being able to adjust their whole portfolio characteristics just through moving a pointer (51a, 52a in Screen A up or down (or the hand of a dial, or the color code on a litmus-type strip, etc.)), as opposed to having to consider and understand the effects on the portfolio from modifying individual stock positions. Thus less than expert investors, for example, can have their portfolio adjusted automatically by having the system re-weight or add cash, or leverage, when the investor adjusts the pointers, dials or colors. The scales, etc. can all be adjusted to make the presentation easier to see for different portfolios.

Detailed Description Text (80):

As shown in screen B, Common stock in company A 57c has a risk relative to the S&P 500 of 0.9 (which is blue on the color coded litmus test example) 55c, it represents 5% of the total value of the portfolio, and its differential return with respect to the S&P 500 is negative 15% 56c, which is also depicted in blue. Each of the remaining stocks is represented in a similar manner. In this example, the stocks are listed in alphabetical order, however, they could be ordered in a different manner depending on an investor preference selection. For example, the investor could adjust the ordering to depict the stocks in order of total value of the portfolio, from low to high risk or vice versa, etc.

Detailed Description Text (81):

In any of these instances, the securities that can be viewed as an integrated, single portfolio for the investor can be any securities, including funds or other investments, the investor inputs into the system. Consequently, if the investor has a variety of accounts that must be maintained as legally disparate and separate accounts, then the investor can still view each of them together as a single integrated account for purposes of analysis and trade execution by having the system include whatever accounts and the securities or other investments contained therein as a single account that the investor desires (likewise, the investor can exclude any securities or other investments he wishes from being included in an account for purposes of analysis or trade execution). In this manner, the investor is provided the benefit of being able to integrate easily all his holdings and understand and manage all his accounts even though they must be maintained in legally separate accounts. Therefore, for the first time, an investor that has securities in a 401(k), an IRA and a separate trading account, and who has securities for an account of his children, can view all the holdings as a single integrated whole and manage them to obtain the benefits of portfolio theory including to ensure proper levels of diversification, sector exposure, concentration levels, overall risk, etc. The investor would do this merely by noting the accounts, or the securities or other investments within accounts, to be grouped together for purposes of acting as a single portfolio. As noted, this aspect of the present invention could also be used for similar analyses regarding other securities for which risk--return information is available, such as and primarily, mutual funds.

Detailed Description Text (83):

After interpretation of the investor's input, the natural language interface 151 provides portfolio and/or securities characteristics 154 to the system. These portfolio and/or securities characteristics are the translation of the investor's desires for a portfolio and/or security into technical terms used more commonly by the investment community to describe portfolios and/or securities.

Detailed Description Text (84):

An alternative input to the system is via a series of canned queries 155 that are displayed on an investor's screen. An example of a canned query might be "I want to invest in stocks that give me a portfolio like the market" or "I want to invest in stocks that are big companies." When an investor clicks on this choice, a series of portfolio and/or securities characteristics 154 are automatically generated for subsequent use by the system of the present invention.

Detailed Description Text (85):

If the investor has specified portfolio characteristics, the flow would proceed to the stock selection mechanism 157 to access information in a securities database 158 which comprises all manner of securities with their associated characteristics. If the investor has specified certain securities characteristics, they are inputted to a file of characteristics 156 which describes the various investment objectives of an individual. For example, an investor may wish to invest in long term and potentially high yield stocks. The portfolio characteristic generator 156 can then generate a series of rules to be used to select stocks. This rule based stock selection 157 then accesses information in the securities database 158. Once stocks are selected, they can be output 159 in a variety of ways. For example, the results can be displayed on an investor's screen, hard copy output can be provided to the investor, or an electronic file can be sent to the investor for storage and later access.

Detailed Description Text (88):

In a similar fashion to the collection of demographic information, individual investor security investments and portfolio characteristics are also collected 164. The specific securities invested in by and/or portfolio characteristics of a given investor are then sent to, and aggregated by, a generalized securities and portfolio characteristics data base 165. This database associates the investments made by particular groups of investors.

Detailed Description Text (89):

When an investor desires to enter an affinity group or to see screens based on group or investor characteristics or do collaborative investing, the investor accesses, via a PC or from a server a series of affinity group selection criteria 166. Such criteria might be profession, annual family earnings, education level, geographic area, and other demographic characteristics. The criteria selected to create a particular affinity group, is then presented to the investor database 163. The affinity group characteristics are retrieved from the generalized demographic database 162 and associated with the particular portfolio or securities selected from the generalized securities/portfolio database 165. This information is then used to create (depending on what the investor requested) a securities and/or portfolio profile 167 of the particular affinity group. This securities/portfolio profile can then be output 168 to the investor. Alternatively, the securities profile 167 can be input to the securities and portfolio database 169 of the present invention so that performance output 170 can be presented to the investor showing how the securities invested in by the particular affinity group actually performed, and can also be presented to the system for execution or inclusion in the investor's portfolio 171. (In a similar manner, any other portfolio that the investor may generate through any of the other means described herein could also be run through the securities/portfolio database 169 and be outputted 170 to the investor showing how the portfolio so selected actually performed.)

Detailed Description Text (90):

In this manner an investor can be quite specific about an affinity group that the investor wishes to create and identify the performance of securities and portfolios invested in by that particular group.

Detailed Description Text (91):

In a similar fashion to the affinity investing in individual securities as part of or separate from a portfolio as described above the present invention allows for

affinity investing with respect to mutual funds or other instruments as well. In this instance, the investor desires to know what mutual funds a particular group has invested in as a basis for making future investment judgments. Again not only can such affinity group mutual fund investing be determined from the investor database, but the performance of the affinity group's investment can also be determined.

Detailed Description Text (92):

Additionally, if a group of investors so desire, the investors can all provide information to the system so that other investors who they permit or who are in their same group can have access to the overall portfolio of the group as a whole--either for monitoring purposes or for analysis or for trade execution. In such instance the system would identify the group as a separate group within the general demographic database 163, and access to the portfolio and securities maintained by the group or the leaders of the group (2) would be permitted to members of the group.

Detailed Description Text (93):

As noted, there will also be pre-packaged or suggested portfolios. The present invention will keep track of those portfolios. For example, the Washingtonian picks can be displayed for an investor who can then be given the option to purchase a basket of securities that are the same as the expert's picks that have been published. The Dow 500 and the Fortune 500 top stocks may also be tracked by the present invention with the opportunity given to invest in the same top stocks as listed in the index or the magazine. Again, performance data on the stocks and portfolios that are potential candidates for investment can be generated to further inform the investor.

Detailed Description Text (96):

FIG. 14 depicts an exemplary embodiment of the overall system according to the computer-based system of the present invention. Within the computer-based system of the present invention is a server 62, which executes a program B, which controls the operation of the entire system. While another program may execute on the investor's PC 63, program A, the investor's program can be completely performed by program B. Alternatively, these two programs A and B can work together like Pointcast, or other similar programs, which download data to an investor's terminal and display this data via a graphical investor interface based on "filter" selections made by the investor. Thus, one possibility for program A is that it is merely a communication program that enables the investor to establish a link to the server 62, and set "filters," which determine what data is sent back and forth to the investor. In this case, the so-called filters consist of the stocks in the investor's portfolio and the investor's risk model, etc. Once established by the investor, the program B then performs all of the analysis and computation required to advise the investor as to the levels of risk and differential return inherent in the investor's portfolio relative to known standards. This enables tight configuration control on the investor software, which makes upgrading and security protection easier.

Detailed Description Text (105):

The computer-based system of the present invention is designed to provide a mechanism for a whole new financial investing system that currently does not exist. It allows investors, with expert assistance, to create, manage and modify a complex portfolio that reflects the investor's own preferences. It allows the investor to ensure that his portfolio is diversified and that it reflects the level of risk he wishes to assume. The computer-based system of the present invention also increases the investor's control over matters like what stocks he owns, the taxes he pays, and how his shares will be voted. And it permits him to purchase and sell whole portfolios and specific securities, and fractional interests in shares of securities--all for a low cost that is less than or competitive to trades of single securities through discount brokers or having an interest in mutual funds.

Detailed Description Text (106):

Investors ("Users" in FIG. 6) access a server that processes the information necessary to enable the investor to create or modify a portfolio in accordance with the computer-based system of the present invention. This access is either through the Internet, through a dial-up modem connection or through an intermediary such as a bank or brokerage that is making the invention available to investors.

Detailed Description Text (111):

Based on this information, the invention suggests a general investment asset allocation that the investor can modify. Such asset allocation models are relatively standard and in current use. However, the standard models can be adjusted by the investor for use in the system to allow the investor to incur additional risk in order to achieve a higher return. The reason for permitting a higher risk-return level than normal is because the investor will be provided the opportunity through the invention to fine-tune--and monitor and maintain--the level of risk (based on a stock's historical volatility) selected by the investor for the investor's portfolio.

Detailed Description Text (112):

This fine tuning of portfolio risk will be far more than would ordinarily be the case, for example, for an investor attempting to select a mutual fund, because the investor utilizing the invention is able to ensure that the selected investments and their risk profile remain subject to the investor's control. In a mutual fund (other than passive or "non-managed" funds), the investor has no assurance as to what stocks, and what weighting of stocks, will be included in the fund in the future, or how much of the fund will be held in cash, and therefore no assurance that the fund will not modify its style and "risk" without the investor having advance knowledge of the change. Even in passive funds there is uncertainty as to how much of the fund is held in cash at any one time. Consequently, the mutual fund investor incurs the additional risk of the uncertainty as to a mutual fund's risk profile, thereby increasing the investor's level of risk without the investor obtaining any benefit.

Detailed Description Text (113):

Once the general asset allocation determinations and risk-return preferences are made, investors are asked, through simple screens, about any preferences they have regarding stocks, such as where securities are listed, capitalization, and business sector; various financial factors such as price/earnings ratio and growth trends, and corporate governance factors such as whether the company sells specified products, or enjoys good labor relations, etc. (Determinations regarding subjective criteria, such as whether a company has "good" or "bad" governance factors, would generally come from third party sources.) An investor could then specify specific stocks-that must, or must not, be included in the portfolio. Consequently, the invention also acts as an ordinary broker--with a very low cost that would be expected to be materially less than even deep discount brokers--when immediate execution is not required or if the system operator is willing to pre-aggregate certain trades. If an investor seeks immediate execution for a selected trade, the invention will provide it, in the same manner as would any other electronic discount brokerage, for a fee that would be competitive with or better than that charged by the reputable discount brokers. After preferences are entered, the invention will create a diversified portfolio that expertly matches, to the extent possible, those preferences and the asset allocation determination--all automatically. If the portfolio is acceptable, the investor will enter the dollar amount to be invested and the securities will be purchased for the investor at the invention's next "transaction window". For the invention to work, costs must be kept low so that investors can purchase and modify whole portfolios of securities on a frequent basis. To accomplish this, under one embodiment of the invention, the invention aggregates the orders entered by the investors utilizing the invention. The orders are aggregated not for the purpose of attempting to match one investor's

order against another investor's order, but to reduce the number of actual transactions required to be executed by the system. The number of aggregations will depend on the number of investors of the system, their usage and other factors, but it is currently contemplated that orders would be aggregated into those received when the market is closed, those received in the morning, and those received in the afternoon, with transactions effected at the market open, mid-day and at the market close. If demand warrants, and other factors make it permissible, transactions could also be effected at other times--such as in the evening or more frequently during the day, if there is a market from which prices can be derived or if there is a market maker willing to make a market at that time and if it appears that effecting a transaction at such time would be consistent with the interests of investors. Similarly, the system operator (a bank or a broker, for example), could "pre-aggregate" some orders by executing against itself as principal and then hold the orders until a transaction window or until a certain amount was reached, etc. in order to execute the pre-aggregated orders. For example, the operator could take ten orders from ten customers and pre-aggregate all of them by executing against itself as those orders are received, and then take the bulk order position that it now owns and execute that as another order. This strategy means that the operator has to take upon itself market risk, and also has certain other disadvantages including potentially having to treat each trade as a reportable order for reporting purposes and other requirements, but it may be viable for certain small orders. Shares can be bought in very, small odd lots (one or two shares), and even in fractions--purchases not possible on a cost-effective basis with ordinary brokerage. All investor actions can be automated, with specified amounts being added each week or month from direct deposits and with selected stocks sold or bought depending on whether they satisfy certain criteria. In subsequent sessions, the investor can modify his portfolio any way he wishes, including to reflect new preferences, add to it with additional dollars invested, or sell some or all of the securities in the portfolio. The investor can also have the portfolio analyzed in connection with other investments the investor may have, such as funds or other investments held in other accounts, to review and modify a whole integrated portfolio. The invention will track the tax "basis" and acquisition date in stock purchases, and which stocks have gains and which have losses: so an investor can choose to sell stocks to generate capital gains or losses (long or short term) and thereby manage tax effects. Moreover, because the investor actually owns the individual securities in the portfolio, instead of just an interest in a fund, the investor has the right to vote the underlying stocks (or delegate the voting in accordance with various instructions), and sell individual stocks when he wishes. The computer-based system of the present invention, therefore, provides complete "hands on" portfolio management for the investor who wishes it--those who employ discount brokerage, and those who select mutual funds on their own and simple, automatic and expert management for an investor who wishes to be completely "taken care of".

Detailed Description Text (114):

The strengths and advantages of the invention include relative to mutual funds: the selection of individual securities to be included in a portfolio; management of and clearly superior tax effects; the ability to make specific modifications to the portfolio at least three times a day, including the ability to buy and sell securities as a block at the open, mid-day or close instead of just at the next close as is the case with mutual funds; the inclusion of world class securities or selection by sector, price/earnings ratio, governance policies, industry or other factors to suit investors' preferences at levels not available in mutual funds; the ability to exercise voting and other shareholder and corporate governance rights and decisions--such as whether to tender securities in a takeover; the ability to control selectively reinvestment of dividends; the ability to fine-tune risk-return preferences with complete control over what will be included in the portfolio and whether there will be a change in investment strategy; the ability to modify risk levels and portfolios with fewer potential costs or tax consequences; the ability to view multiple investments more easily as fully integrated portfolio and manage

it as such; and the ability to manage costs better.

Detailed Description Text (115):

Those strengths and advantages relative to discount brokerages include: inexpensive and cost-effective manner of creating a diversified portfolio; ability to acquire small odd lots and fractional shares in multiple securities at reasonable costs; far less cost in purchasing and selling individual securities (assuming immediate execution is not required)--as compared even to the deepest discount brokers; ability to establish portfolio wide limitations and parameters such as required diversification of a portfolio and maximum risk levels; monitoring of portfolio based-tax effects; assistance in defining diversification and selection of stocks that satisfy diversification goals; assistance in defining other factors and investor preferences and selection of stocks that satisfy those other preferences and goals; and a likelihood of obtaining better execution than can be obtained through discount brokers due to matching of trades.

Detailed Description Text (116):

One exemplary embodiment of the present invention is for use in self-managed 401(k) accounts. By placing certain restrictions on the risk levels and a minimum number of assets/liabilities, the system can operate as a self-managed 401(k). For example, an employer may want to permit its employees to manage their own accounts, without incurring costs to the employer. So, once the plan is established, the individual accounts are billed a relatively low monthly fee (or small asset based fee) for enabling the user to be a self-managed account. But to protect the employer, the accounts would have certain restrictions placed on them so that an employee cannot invest all of his account into a single stock, for example, or create a portfolio with extremely high risk levels. The program can be set up to prevent execution of trades that violate these base parameters, and inform the user of the reason for non-execution.

Detailed Description Text (117):

Another exemplary embodiment of the present invention is for use by an existing brokerage company that permits its investors/customers to create a portfolio, as described above, and trade that portfolio via the brokerage company. Once the portfolios reach the central computer, they are broken down into their constituent trades. At this point, there are several possibilities. One, the trades can be aggregated, and netted against one another, leaving only a small number of shares to either be purchased or sold for each asset/liability. In this case, the brokerage company can undertake the risk that the stock will go up or down and simply reallocate the ownership of the stocks within the company and then at the end of the day (or several times throughout the day) execute a trade to remove any risk. Two, the trades can be continuously executed as they arrive, thereby reducing any risk. In this case, the investors are still investing portfolio's, but the company is handling the underlying transactions to implement the desired portfolios. Third, the trades can simply be aggregated until reaching a certain size (either in dollars or numbers of share), at which point they are executed.

Detailed Description Text (119):

The computer-based system of the present invention can be used by ordinary investors to manage other "things" such as options and commodities trading, bonds, foreign equities, or used for investment banking for the trading of, for example, derivatives. The computer-based system of the present invention can be used to establish a system to create and manage a portfolio of any assets or liabilities or combination thereof that can be traded, and provides benefits whenever diversification or utilization of portfolio concepts is an advantage (as would be the case with most financial assets). For example, as described above the invention could be used for any security, including foreign or domestic equities, options, warrants, bonds, notes, limited partnership interests, private placement securities or otherwise. In addition, the invention could be used for commodities, futures, bank loan syndication interests and novel assets or liabilities that are traded

such as pollution rights (including global warming and air/water pollution rights) or insurance claim interests. The method of: 1) obtaining preferences for portfolio characteristics of investors; 2) employing those preferences to describe and select items to be transacted; 3) analyzing and transacting on such assets as a portfolio as opposed to as separate assets; 4) aggregating such transactions over an applicable characteristic, such as a time period (for example, every three hours) or a time certain (for example, at 9:30 am, 12:30 pm and 4:30 pm) or an amount (for example, having 1,000 transactions, or transactions totaling \$5,000, aggregated) or otherwise; and 5) executing the transactions as aggregated and, if applicable, netted, transactions can be applied to any of these items.

CLAIMS:

1. A program encoded on a computer readable medium for executing on a computer, enabling an individual or smaller investor to create, manage and trade a portfolio of market tradable assets or liabilities, directly owned by the investor in a market for each of the assets or liabilities and for interfacing with a system for managing a plurality of individual or smaller investors' portfolios via a first communication link over which the individual or smaller investor transmits to the system trading data regarding trades of at least one asset or liability directly owned by the investor and that the individual or smaller investor desires to make, said program comprising: a) a graphical investor interface prompting the individual or smaller investor for investor identification information, investor investment information, including an amount to be invested and a payment method, and investor preference data; b) an asset allocation modeling process creating a percentage allocation of assets for the individual or smaller investor based on the investor preference data, wherein the graphical investor interface displays via the computer display a plurality of assets or liabilities among which the individual or smaller investor can select to create an individual or smaller investor portfolio containing assets or liabilities directly owned by the investor and commensurate with the percentage allocation of assets; c) a risk and differential return calculation process continuously calculating a risk and a differential return of the entire individual or smaller investor portfolio relative to a standard industry measurement in response to changes in the portfolio made by the individual or smaller investor, and providing the relative risk and differential return to the graphical investor interface, which displays the relative risk and differential return to the individual or smaller investor, said risk and differential return process allocating the investment amount across the entire individual or smaller investor portfolio to identify trades of the assets or liabilities directly owned by the investor and contained in the portfolio that are required to achieve the desired risk and differential return, wherein said trades include single shares, odd lots and/or fractional shares of the assets or liabilities; d) a portfolio editor process enabling the individual or smaller investor to modify the investor portfolio; e) a value at risk and sensitivity calculation process calculating a value at risk and a sensitivity return of the entire individual or smaller investor portfolio, and providing such value and analysis to the graphical investor interface, which displays the value and analysis to the individual or smaller investor; and f) a communication process communicating said investor identification information along with any trades of market tradable assets or liabilities to be executed in a market for each of the assets or liabilities to create or modify an individual or smaller investor's portfolio to ensure an individual or smaller investor's actual portfolio matches an individual or smaller investor's desired portfolio to the system, and matching the parameters of any limitations imposed on the portfolio, as said trading data via the first communication link, said trading data including an order to trade the portfolio of assets or liabilities, said communication process communicating trades including single shares, odd lots and/or fractional shares of said assets or liabilities to the system for managing a plurality of individual or smaller investor's portfolios for aggregation of said single shares, odd lots and/or fractional shares with other investors' trades.

12. The program according to claim 1, wherein the portfolio editor process further comprises a routine that accesses a database located in the system storing a plurality of assets or liabilities, from which the individual or smaller investor can select to create and modify the portfolio of the individual or smaller investor.

13. The program according to claim 1, wherein the portfolio editor process further comprises a default portfolio process providing a default portfolio to the individual or smaller investor based on a selection of a type of portfolio by the individual or smaller investor.

14. The program according to claim 13, wherein the type of portfolio includes at least one selected from the group consisting of: Dow Jones 30 index, S&P 500 index and Russell 2000.

15. The program according to claim 13, wherein the default portfolio process creates a portfolio that reflects similar risk/return characteristics to one selected from the group consisting of: the Dow Jones 30 index, the S&P 500 index and the Russell 2000 index.

16. The program according to claim 1, wherein the portfolio editor process provides a list of assets or liabilities chosen by an investor specifiable group.

20. A method using aggregation for creating and managing a portfolio of market tradable assets or liabilities, comprising the steps of: obtaining a plurality of investor preferences for characteristics of a plurality of distinct assets or liabilities for the portfolio of an investor; employing the plurality of investor preferences to select a plurality of distinct market tradable assets or liabilities to be owned directly by the investor and to be transacted in a market for each of the assets or liabilities in a plurality of transactions for the investor; aggregating the plurality of transactions of the investor with a plurality of transactions of a plurality of other investors over an applicable characteristic of the plurality of assets or liabilities, wherein said aggregating includes aggregating single shares, odd lots and/or fractional shares using a computer; and placing one or more trades based on said aggregating, wherein the selected plurality of distinct market tradable assets or liabilities are owned directly by the investor in the investor's portfolio as a result of said one or more trades.

33. The method according to claim 31, further comprising the step of changing the portfolio characteristics in response to the investor changing one selected from the group of: the color code, the numerical indicator, the location of the arrow on the dial, the location of the arrow on the horizontal scale, and the location of the arrow on vertical scale.

34. The method according to claim 30, further comprising the step of changing the portfolio characteristics in response to the investor changing the location of the arrow on the range of numerical values.

35. The method according to claim 20, further comprising: a) receiving data from each investor of the plurality of other investors regarding an amount of money to be invested in a portfolio for each respective investor for a predetermined period, and accessing an electronic payment system upon receiving instructions from said each investor to purchase said each respective portfolio of assets or liabilities to obtain payment for the required purchases; b) enabling said each investor to create and manage said each respective portfolio of assets or liabilities directly owned by the respective investor by displaying a list of assets or liabilities from which said each investor can select to be in the portfolio; c) receiving commands to trade said each respective portfolio of assets or liabilities directly owned by the respective investor, and sending trading orders to an electronic trading system for execution in accordance with the commands; and d) storing said each investor's

portfolio.

36. The method according to claim 35, wherein aggregating the plurality of transactions comprises aggregating all investors' trades and sending the aggregated trades as a single trade in each asset or liability to a trading system.

41. The method according to claim 20, wherein the plurality of transactions include an order to trade at least one of the assets or liabilities according to a periodic monetary contribution to the investor portfolio.

49. The method according to claim 48, further comprising permitting trading of the assets or liabilities for the investor only if the investor's payment account contains at least a predetermined monetary amount.

51. The method according to claim 20, further comprising prompting the investor for investor identification information and investor preferences, transmitting said investor identification and investor preferences to a processor, and enabling the investor to interact with the processor to select a plurality of assets or liabilities to create an investor portfolio commensurate with a percentage allocation of investment assets, and to have parameters and limitations established as to portfolio characteristics that will be permitted for the investor.

52. The method according to claim 20, further comprising creating or modifying the investor's portfolio to ensure the investor's actual portfolio matches the investor's desired portfolio in accordance with the investor's preferences.

56. The method according to claim 20, further comprising maintaining a tax basis and date of acquisition for all of the assets or liabilities traded by the investor.

59. The method according to claim 58, further comprising transmitting to the investor actual trading pricing information regarding each asset or liability traded by the investor.

60. The method according to claim 58, further comprising modifying a display of risk and differential return of the investor portfolio in accordance with the actual trading pricing information for at least one of the assets or liabilities traded by the investor.

61. The method according to claim 58, further comprising recommending modifications to the investor portfolio to the investor via a graphical user interface to make the investor portfolio match a percentage allocation previously determined if the investor portfolio no longer matches the percentage allocation as a result of the actual trading pricing information received.

63. The method according to claims 20, further comprising creating an affinity group comprising individuals having similar characteristics, the similar characteristics being selectable by the investor, determining what assets or liabilities have been traded by the affinity group, and executing a trade of those assets or liabilities that have been traded by the affinity group on behalf of the investor.

64. The method according to claim 63, further comprising soliciting demographic information from a plurality of other investors comprising characteristics of the plurality of other investors, said soliciting including: (i) soliciting information relating to what assets or liabilities have been traded by each of the plurality of other investors, (ii) storing the demographic information in a searchable database of demographic information, (iii) storing the traded assets or liabilities information in the searchable database; and (iv) associating the stored assets or liabilities information with the stored demographic information.

65. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises providing a default portfolio to the investor based on a selection of a type of portfolio by the investor.

66. The method according to claim 65, wherein the type of portfolio includes at least one selected from the group consisting of: Dow Jones 30 index, S&P 500 index and Russell 2000.

67. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises creating a portfolio that reflects similar risk/return characteristics to one selected from the group consisting of: the Dow Jones 30 index, the S&P 500 index and the Russell 2000 index.

71. The method according to claim 20, further comprising creating a percentage allocation of assets for the investor based on the investor preferences and displaying a plurality of assets or liabilities among which the investor can select to create the investor portfolio containing assets or liabilities commensurate with the percentage allocation of assets.

72. The method according to claim 20, further comprising continuously calculating a risk and a differential return of the entire investor portfolio relative to a standard industry measurement in response to changes in the investor portfolio made by the investor.

73. The method according to claim 72, further comprising displaying the relative risk and differential return to the investor, allocating an investment amount across the entire investor portfolio to identify trades of the assets or liabilities to be owned or currently owned by the investor and included in the investor portfolio that are required to achieve the desired risk and differential return.

74. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises providing a list of market tradable assets or liabilities to the investor and enabling the investor to select one or more assets or liabilities from the list to create the investor portfolio.

75. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises providing one or more pre-packaged groups of assets or liabilities to the investor and enabling the investor to select one or more of the pre-packaged groups to create the investor portfolio.

76. The method according to claim 20, wherein the obtaining comprises receiving investor preferences for portfolio characteristics of an investor, and the employing comprises using the portfolio characteristics to create the investor portfolio.

77. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises screening based on the investor preferences a plurality of assets or liabilities available for selection by the investor, providing to the investor a list assets or liabilities that satisfy the screening and enabling the investor to select one or more of the assets or liabilities from the list to create the investor portfolio.

81. The program according to claim 13, wherein the type of portfolio includes a stock index or a subset of a stock index.

82. The program according to claim 13, wherein the default portfolio process creates a portfolio that reflects similar risk/return characteristics to a stock index or a subset of a stock index.

84. The method according to claim 65, wherein the type of portfolio includes a stock index or a subset of a stock index.

85. The method according to claim 20, wherein the employing comprises creating a portfolio that reflects similar risk/return characteristics to a stock index or a subset of a stock index.

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L15: Entry 11 of 11

File: USPT

Jul 29, 2003

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DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6601044 B1

TITLE: Method and apparatus for enabling individual or smaller investors or others to create and manage a portfolio of securities or other assets or liabilities on a cost effective basis

DATE-ISSUED: July 29, 2003

INVENTOR-INFORMATION:

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FolioFn, Inc.	Vienna	VA			02

APPL-NO: 09/139020 [\[PALM\]](#)

DATE FILED: August 24, 1998

PARENT-CASE:

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER APPLICATIONS This application is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/038,158 entitled "Method and Apparatus for Enabling Individual or Smaller Investors or Others to Create and Manage a Portfolio of Securities or Other Assets Or Liabilities on a Cost Effective Basis" filed by the same inventor on Mar. 11, 1998, which is hereby incorporated by reference as if repeated herein in its entirety, including the drawings.

INT-CL-ISSUED: [07] [G06 F 17/60](#)

US-CL-ISSUED: 705/36; 705/35, 705/37

US-CL-CURRENT: [705/36R](#); [705/35](#), [705/37](#)

FIELD-OF-CLASSIFICATION-SEARCH: 705/36, 705/37, 705/35

See application file for complete search history.

PRIOR-ART-DISCLOSED:

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

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ABSTRACT:

A computer-based system is disclosed for creating a portfolio of assets and executing trades in the assets to modify the portfolio. An embodiment of the disclosed system includes a first processor interfaced with an investor's PC to select a plurality of assets to be in the investor's portfolio based on the investor's indicated preferences, to manage the portfolio in accordance with market changes and changes in the investor's indicated preferences, and to electronically place at least one asset trading order in accordance with the investor's indicated preferences. An embodiment of the system also includes a communication interface coupled to the processor and coupled to a plurality of other investors by which the processor electronically places the at least one order. Further, an embodiment of the system includes a central processor coupled to the communication interface, receiving a plurality of trading orders from among the plurality of investors' PC's, and electronically forwarding the trading orders for execution to a third party.

86 Claims, 18 Drawing figures

[Previous Doc](#)

[Next Doc](#)

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